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## ABSTRACT

This document contains the final report, trainer handbook for volunteer tutor trainers, and idea book for volunteer tutors from a project conducted to develop a supplemental tutor training program and life skills curriculum specifically for developmentally disabled (DD) adult learners. The final report describes how a group of DD adult learners were assessed with the BADER Individual Reading Inventory, and writing samples were collected from them. The assessment results and data from field observations of classes for DD adults, a survey of available adult education materials for DD learners, and interviews with tutors were used to develop a curriculum and tutor training program. Tutors and project staff brainstormed learning strategies for DD adult students, and the brainstorming session results were compiled into an idea book. Four training sessions were conducted, and 50 tutor-learner pairs were matched. The trainer handbook includes the following: training process overview, training agenda, sensitivity exercises, text and workbook suggestions, support services to assist volunteers, and miscellaneous forms. Described in the idea book are 49 activities grouped into the following categories: prereading; reading; writing; speaking and listening; math, measurement, and money; self-esteem; and life skills. (MN)

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### ABSTRACT PAGE

Title: CURRICULUM FOR LEARNERS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES

Project No.: 98-4015

Funding: \$15,225.00

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Purpose: The purpose of the project was to develop a supplemental tutor training and a life skills curriculum specifically for adult learners with developmental disabilities. A Tutor Trainer guide and Idea Book were developed for easy duplication.

Procedures: Adult learners were assessed with the BADER Individual Reading Inventory and a writing sample collection. Observations were done by the area Field Supervisors. A survey of adult education materials available for learners with developmental disabilities was conducted. This research, observations, and tutor/learner interviews led to the collaborative development of the supplemental training. Tutors and staff brainstormed learning strategies and activities appropriate for this audience. The results are compiled in the Idea Book.

Summary of Findings: There were two significant findings. First, there is a serious difficiency of materials available for tutors working with adults who have developmental disabilities. Second, there is a need to develop stronger referral systems with caseworkers in agencies who specifically work with these adults.

Comments: During the supplemental training development process, we discovered a logistical problem with the design of the original proposal. We had originally intended to provide the supplemental training to experienced volunteers who were unmatched at the time of the training. However, we found that the more effective process for our program would be matching the tutors with these adult learners first and offering the supplemental training afterwards so tutors could immediately apply new ideas to their lesson activities.

Products: A final report, an Idea Book, and a Tutor Trainer Guide.

Descriptors

## Introduction

Mid-State Literacy Council (MSLC) is a private, non-profit agency that provides free one-to-one instruction in reading, writing, math, and English as a Second Language to adult learners in Centre and Clearfield Counties. MSLC is composed of three offices, one in State College, one in Clearfield, and one in DuBois, Pennsylvania. Each of these offices has a Field Supervisor who is responsible for the recruitment and assessment of adult learners, as well as the recruitment, training, and supervision of volunteer tutors. MSLC serves over 500 adult learners and trains an average of 200 volunteers every year.

As a council that serves primarily beginning and beginning-intermediate readers, we noticed a need to provide extra training for our literacy volunteers who are, or will be, matched with a growing population of adults that can be classified as learners with special needs. \* We became aware that many of our volunteers feel unable to cope with a learner who has special needs. These volunteers feel inadequate for various reasons. Some express apprehension about working with a person with mental retardation. Some volunteers feel that their expectations for the learner's success would not be met with a learner who has special needs. Some volunteers express concern at their lack of professional training in the field of special education, and many feel that learners with special needs are unable to learn at all.

\* For the purposes of this grant, we defined learners with special needs as adults who read at or below the second grade level. As our work on this grant progressed, we realized that this term, "special needs," is not the most appropriate or the most correct. After all, these individuals need the same things that any adult needs: love, family, rewarding employment, friends, and a home. Perhaps, for adults who have severe developmental disabilities, these needs are more difficult to fulfill. A year of discussion has not led us to a viable alternative. For the purpose of clarity, we will use this term throughout the final report and trainer handbook.



The MSLC Educational Program Coordinator, Gaie Wilt, worked with a learner with special needs for over a year. She described her experience as follows:

Working with [him] was rewarding but not exactly what I had expected. Indeed, I learned as much about myself as I did about him. I also learned that my initial reaction to him - my feelings of not being able to cope - was illustrative of my own fears that I projected onto him. I learned that as a tutor, *my* expectations must be put aside and I must learn to observe what *he can do and wants to do* based on his goals and needs. I also became aware *that there were certain strategies that could help him learn.*

We realized that our agency might more successfully recruit tutors to assist us in helping our growing population of learners with special needs if we could sensitize the volunteers to certain facts: Learners with special needs *are not scary, they can learn, and volunteers can cope and are qualified to help these adults learn.* We also realized that with a stronger system of training and support in the early stages of the tutor/learner match, we could help keep the volunteers excited and positive about what they are accomplishing with their learning partners.

We knew that many of our active volunteer tutors had successful and enjoyable experiences with their learning partners and that they could help us train new tutors. When we asked for their help, they were delighted to share their expertise. In addition, they agreed to help us create the Idea Book by sharing the special methodologies they felt helped their learning partners become successful learners.

This grant is therefore a collection of experiences and advice. During the 1993-1994 grant year, we set out to develop a supplemental training for our volunteers who work with adults with special needs. Roni Dennis, Shelby McClintock, Gaie Wilt, and Barb Beck, Renata Laurent, and Kathy Marino worked together with

local human service agencies, volunteer tutors, and adult learners to develop a strong referral system, a Special Needs Training, a Trainer Handbook, and an Idea Book for volunteer tutors and educational staff. We hope that our thoughts, observations, ideas, and suggestions can help other literacy providers serve this challenging community of adult learners.

For more information on this project, please contact one of the following:

**Department of Education**  
Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

**AdvancE**

**The Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center**

## **Problem Statement**

As the staff at Mid-State Literacy Council began to work with more and more adults who had developmental disabilities, we realized that the tutors and learners needed more material that was specifically designed for beginning learners. After an extensive search of the texts, workbooks, and literature available, it became clear that very little material existed that would truly serve the needs of these adult learners and the volunteers who tutor them. As a result, Mid-State Literacy Council applied for this grant, in hopes that the staff could develop a tutor training and supplemental learning packets for tutors and learners to use.

## Objectives and Outcomes

**Objective One:** To develop a 3 hour supplemental tutor training, specifically to train experienced volunteers to tutor persons with developmental or physical disabilities.

This training was developed by the educational staff in the first stage of the grant. Several videos which dealt with adults with developmental disabilities were previewed, and the video "Teaching Daily Living Skills" was chosen for use in the training. Staff met with representatives from local human service agencies (such as Goodwill Industries, Partial Hospitals, and Mental Health Units) who work with adults with developmental disabilities to discuss what they felt were the important issues to discuss in the training. The training was designed to help sensitize tutors to the issue of developmental disabilities, as well as to encourage volunteer tutors to work together to develop learning strategies for use with their learning partners.

**Objective Two:** To conduct four such trainings and match 50 tutor/learner pairs.

Four trainings were conducted during the grant year, one in State College, one in Clearfield, and two in DuBois. Over twenty volunteers completed the training and as a result, contributed to the Trainer Handbook and the Idea Book. Initially, we planned to train experienced volunteers *before* we matched them with a learning partner who had developmental disabilities. However, as the logistics

of this became increasingly difficult, we decided to train the volunteers who were currently matched with these learners.

This change in focus was significant, because these tutors came to the training with a knowledge of their partners strengths and weaknesses. They came with specific questions they already had from their current tutoring experience. Most importantly, however, they came with ideas for learning strategies that had already been successful with their individual partners. As a result, the training became a combination of training and sharing. The tutors and the trainers worked together to discuss the complex issues involved in working with severely disabled individuals and jointly came to conclusions and discovered new ideas.

**Objective Three:** To create a curriculum guide with accompanying learning packets that provide tutor/ learner pairs with materials that approach the acquisition of language and life skills.

As mentioned earlier, the training was given to tutors who had already been working with their "special needs" learning partners for some time. We asked them to share their successful strategies with us, and these strategies formed the foundation of our Idea Book. Originally, we had planned to make packets for specific activities. As more work was done on the Idea Book, we felt it important that tutors have access to all of the activities, not just those related to a specific topic. We therefore decided to combine the learning activities into the Idea Book. This book included sections of activities intended to develop skills in several areas: pre-reading, reading, listening and speaking, writing, math, measurement and money, and life skills. Staff and tutors brainstormed together to compile a comprehensive set of activities and ideas for tutors and their learning partners.

**Objective Four:** To establish monthly support group meeting which will focus on tutor concerns, questions, and achievements.

For the first quarter of the grant year, monthly Support Group meetings were held in the Clearfield and DuBois offices. After discussion with the tutors who attended, a quarterly schedule was set. These meetings were initially attended by a staff member, but as the year progressed, the tutors took the responsibility for organization and planning. Staff members would do short presentations on topics as requested, but the meetings remained tutor-run. These meetings were opened to all tutors, and grew to be a significant part of the tutoring experience. Tutors were able to vent frustrations, share ideas and successes, and learn together about issues in adult education.

**Objective Five:** To conduct two tutor/learner observations for each tutor/learner pair.

In an effort to increase the support system for tutors who work with developmentally disabled learners, we instituted a Post Match Observation in the Clearfield office. This observation was scheduled four to six weeks after the match. The purpose of this observation was multifaceted. First, the observation allowed the educational staff to be sure the proper materials and methods were being used. Second, it allowed the staff to observe the tutors' ability to relate to the needs and interests of the learners. Third, the staff used this opportunity to reaffirm the purpose of the tutoring, to praise both the tutor and the learner for their commitment, and to answer any questions the tutor and learner had early in the match. Tutors and learners responded positively to this observation, and many problems were solved early enough to prevent learner drop-out.

A second observation was scheduled later in the year. This meeting included a reassessment of the learner and extensive discussion of goal setting and progress with both the tutor and the learner. A new Educational Plan was written and new methods and materials were assigned according to the learner's progress, new interests, and goals.

**Objective Six:** To meet with an Evaluating Task Force quarterly.

Members from local human service agencies were invited to be a part of the Evaluating Task Force. This task force met twice throughout the year. More meetings were scheduled, but due to the unusually harsh winter, rescheduling and eventually cancellations became unavoidable.

This group was a valuable source of ideas for the contents of the tutor training, as well as the Idea Book. In addition, we worked with the members of this group to develop a referral process that allowed for the coordination of services between agencies that serve the population of adults who are developmentally disabled.

**Objective Seven:** To write an accompanying tutor trainer's guide for use in other literacy programs.

This guide was developed simultaneously with the training. Each educational coordinator in the ABLE program designed a training agenda, and other parts of the training were described in detail. The Trainer's Guide is designed to be easily adaptable to other literacy programs throughout the state.



## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Although there is a serious lack of beginning level materials available to adult educators, we feel that volunteer tutors are an excellent source of learning ideas. After working with our volunteer tutors to develop the Special Needs Training and the Idea Book, we realized that many tutors were independently developing learning strategies that were easily transferable to use with other learners. We encourage all literacy providers to use their active volunteers as a resource - no one knows the learners better.

In addition, we found that our local human resource providers were excited about working with us to improve the services we were all providing to this challenging community of adults. We strongly recommend that literacy providers who wish to incorporate the Idea Book and/or the Special Needs Training into their program contact these valuable resources in their communities. The referral agreement allowed our agency to work more closely with other agencies to better serve the needs of each adult learner.

After a year's worth of discussion, research, and writing, we hope that the final products of this grant will serve the Pennsylvania Adult Educational community well. These materials will be successful only when paired with a supportive program and dedicated volunteers who are willing to try a new approach. We hope that tutor trainers can adapt the ideas within the Trainer Handbook to their specific program needs. We encourage administrators, coordinators, volunteers, and learners to work with the Idea Book, to experiment with it, and to build upon it.

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Mid-State Literacy Council

Special Needs Training

**Trainer Handbook**

for

Volunteer Tutor Trainers

Compiled by MSLC Staff and Volunteers  
and Supporting Agencies  
Written by Shelby McClintock

a part of the  
Curriculum for Learners with Developmental Disabilities  
Pennsylvania Department of Education 353 Project # 98-4015

## Acknowledgments

Many people contributed to the ideas and activities within these pages. We would like to thank all of them for their dedication to this project, and to the education of adults in Pennsylvania.

### **MSLC Staff**

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Ann Harper, Administrative Assistant

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Lisa Coval and Joyce Sankey, Clearfield RSVP  
Lisa Dagher and Linda Sorberra, Clearfield County JTPA  
Mary Franks, Clearfield/Jefferson CMHC  
Lauren Haag and Kerry Solak, CIU EvenStart  
Kerry Latham and Michelle Szpara, Penn State Writing Center  
Debbie Liadis, Clearfield Volunteer Center  
Kathy Martin, Pauline Raab, and Dorris Tekley, Cen-Clear Child Services  
Beth Pirnick and Steve Whitman, MH/MR Base Service Unit, Clearfield  
Judy Yarger, Clearfield Job Center

## Preface

We have developed this handbook to be a resource for adult literacy volunteer trainers who wish to provide a supplemental training for volunteers who are or will be working with adult learners who have special needs. This handbook addresses some of the larger issues you, as a trainer and educational coordinator, deal with as a result of serving this population of learners. In addition, we included three training agendas for you to modify to best fit your agency's needs. We have organized the parts of these agendas for you to put together in a puzzle-like fashion, so your Special Needs Training will best compliment the basic training your volunteers already receive.

Because all the volunteers who went through these Special Needs trainings during our grant process had previously attended our ABLE Volunteer Tutor Training Workshop, we recommend that you begin by reviewing the section on our volunteer interview and training process (Chapter 4). This will give you a better understanding of the foundation of knowledge our volunteers had when they went through the Special Needs Training we designed.

This handbook was a joint effort on the part of many staff, volunteers, referral agency representatives, and adult learners. We hope that the ideas and suggestions contained within this manual will help the adult education community of Pennsylvania better serve adult learners who have special needs. When you have finished looking through these materials, please take some time to copy and complete the evaluation form in the back of the manual, so that we can continue to work toward a better educational experience for everyone.



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## Introduction

Mid-State Literacy Council (MSLC) is a private, non-profit agency that provides free one-to-one instruction in reading, writing, math, and English as a Second Language to adult learners in Centre and Clearfield Counties. MSLC serves the community in three primary locations: State College, Clearfield, and DuBois, Pennsylvania. Each of these offices has a Field Supervisor who is responsible for the recruitment and assessment of adult learners, as well as the recruitment, training, and supervision of volunteer tutors. MSLC serves over 500 adult learners and trains an average of 100 volunteers every year.

As a council that serves primarily beginning and beginning-intermediate readers, we noticed a need to provide extra training for our literacy volunteers who are, or will be, matched with a growing population of adults that can be classified as learners with special needs. \* We became aware that many of our volunteers feel unable to cope with a learner who has special needs. These volunteers feel inadequate for various reasons. Some express apprehension about working with a person with mental retardation. Some volunteers feel that their expectations for learner success would not be met with a learner who has special needs. Some volunteers express concern at their lack of professional training in the field of special education, and many feel that learners with special needs are unable to learn at all.

The MSLC Educational Program Coordinator, Gaie Wilt, worked with a learner with special needs for over a year. She described her experience as follows:

Working with [him] was rewarding but not exactly what I had expected. Indeed, I learned as much about myself as I did about

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## MSLC Trainer Handbook

him. I also learned that my initial reaction to him - my feelings of not being able to cope - was illustrative of my own fears that I projected onto him. I learned that as a tutor, *my* expectations must be put aside and I must learn to observe what *he can do and wants to do* based on his goals and needs. I also became aware that *there were certain strategies that could help him learn.*

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We knew that many of our active volunteer tutors have successful and enjoyable experiences with their learning partners and that they could help us train new tutors. When we asked for their help, they were delighted to share their expertise. In addition, they agreed to help us create the Idea Book by sharing the special methodologies they felt helped their learning partners become successful learners.

This grant is therefore a collection of research, experiences and advice. MSLC staff worked together with local human service agencies, volunteer tutors, and adult learners to develop a strong referral system, a Special Needs Training, a Trainer Handbook, and an Idea Book for volunteer tutors and educational staff. We hope that our thoughts, observations, ideas, and suggestions can help other literacy providers serve this challenging community of adult learners.

## The Power of Language

One of the most important issues in the education of people with developmental disabilities (or any kind of disability) is the issue of language. In the article, "A Language of Acceptance," Dennis W. Felty addresses the need for a more person-oriented language in the world of human services. He explains that when we refer to the "client," we, in a sense, take away that individual's person-ness.

This presents a dilemma because the world of human services is an extremely confidential one. If we are not to use "client," how, then, do we refer to those individuals who receive our services? The educator's answer to this question has, for some time, been the word "student." We at MSLC, however, argue that using this term defeats our efforts to separate this learning experience from past, more negative ones.

The word student implies passivity. "I am the student, you are the teacher - teach me." The message the adult educator wants to convey is not one of passivity, but one of action - a message that says we are here to help you, but *you must do the learning*. The term "learner," therefore, is perhaps a better solution.

Using this term accomplishes several things. First, and perhaps most importantly, it places the ownership of the education in the right place, in the hands of the adult learner. Second, the learners are elevated from subordinate (I am the student, you are the tutor) to equal (let us learn together). Third, this term includes adult learners who are in ABLE programs in a category to which all adult learners belong; the new reader, the job trainee, and the college student are all members of the community of lifelong learners. Finally, this language allows the literacy council to break free of an educational stereotype. We are all learners, there are no divisions, no remedial classrooms. We are all in this, as learners, together.

## Definitions

**Discrimination:** Discrimination is the ability to discriminate, or observe, the difference between letters, pictures, sounds, etc. Discrimination is usually divided into Visual and Auditory. Many adults who are beginning readers have some type of discrimination difficulty. A person who has difficulty with visual discrimination may switch letters around and read "was" instead of "saw", or "on" instead of "no." This individual may have difficulty distinguishing between letters that look alike such as b/d, m/n, m/w, or p/q. This person may have trouble reading from left to right. A person who has difficulty with auditory discrimination may have trouble hearing the difference between the sounds in bat and baby. This person may have trouble with listening comprehension, or sounding out words. These are just some examples of how visual and auditory discrimination difficulties can manifest themselves.

**Intelligences:** The idea of multiple intelligences is not a new one. The theory is that there are many "intelligences" or learning strengths within the human mind (the Visual, Spatial, Rhythmic, Tactile, Intra-personal, Inter-personal, and Verbal Intelligences). According to this theory, every person has learning strengths in a different combination of intelligences. Since schools are primarily oriented toward the visual and auditory intelligences, learners who are not strong in these intelligences, but may be in others, often experience learning difficulties. Adult educators have known for a long time that adult learners benefit from exercises which use the hands, but this theory expands on that knowledge to suggest the use of even more senses or intelligences. We tried to emphasize the need for using many senses or intelligences in learning activities throughout the training and materials we developed as part of this grant.

**Prediction Skills:** Prediction is the ability to guess what might come next in a sentence, a paragraph, a story, or even a word. As strong readers, we may not realize how much of our reading involves prediction. We prepare ourselves for

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unknown words and ideas by constantly predicting what might come next. We read faster because we are able to predict. Because prediction is such a vital part of reading, it is a skill that should be developed from the very beginning of reading practice, even before reading begins. Many of the pre-reading, reading, and listening exercises in the Idea Book emphasize the development of prediction skills.

**Special Needs:** As mentioned in the introduction, this term does not completely satisfy us. We use it in these materials to refer to adult learners who read at or below the second grade level. In general, the idea of special needs is that the individual has some developmental disabilities that have kept him or her from learning to read and write. This is different than an individual who has not learned because of environmental barriers (moving a lot during school, etc.) The term "learners with developmental disabilities" is a possible alternative.

**Sensitivity Exercise:** This is an activity [usually done in a group] that helps a person understand something, or become sensitive to a particular issue. For example, to help a person understand what it is like to have a severe vision problem, you can smear Vaseline on a pair of glasses and ask them to read. These types of exercises are extremely valuable for helping volunteers become sensitive to the disabilities that adult learners might have.



## MSLC Volunteer Tutor Interview and Training Process Overview

### The Volunteer Interview

After working with volunteers from many different educational backgrounds, we decided to adopt a volunteer interview process. MSLC has been using this process for many years, but working on this grant alerted us to the fact that our forms needed to be revised to make the language more sensitive and to incorporate questions that would better address the issues related to learners with special needs.

The volunteer interview is scheduled with each potential volunteer who is interested in attending the Basic Tutor Training Workshop. It is conducted on an individual basis by the tutor trainer and is completed prior to the training. The interview lasts approximately one-half hour and gives the tutor and the trainer the opportunity to learn more about the program and each other.

The volunteer interview has helped strengthen the MSLC program for several reasons:

1. Because the interview occurs before the training, volunteers develop a better understanding of what is required of them. The volunteers can then decide to pursue other volunteer opportunities within the literacy council if tutoring does not seem right for them *before* they go through the training process.
2. Since the trainer has the chance to meet with each volunteer before the workshop, the trainer can learn more about the backgrounds and experiences of the trainees and adapt the training workshop accordingly. This tends to improve the overall atmosphere of the training workshop by making it more friendly and personal.



3. The trainer has the opportunity to correct any misconceptions that volunteers may have about the adult learners in the literacy program. Although volunteers know they will be helping people improve their reading, often the level of ability their learning partner will have is much lower than the volunteers' expectations. **This early discussion allows the volunteers to readjust their expectations. This can help keep the volunteers from being surprised and overwhelmed when they are matched with their first learning partner, especially if that partner has special needs.**

*The Volunteer Tutor Training*

The MSLC Volunteer Tutor Training Workshop is a nine or ten hour workshop that is usually held on a Friday (6-9) and Saturday (9-4) or on three week nights (6-9 each night). The training can be divided into three areas: sensitivity to adult learners, tutoring methods and materials, and lesson planning and learner assessment. We cover a wide variety of techniques and train the volunteers to adapt these to their learning partners' needs and interests. We stress the idea that each learner is an individual who responds to words and language differently. We emphasize that it is each volunteer's goal to understand how his or her partner learns best and to build on the learner's strengths.

This basic tutor training covers many of the ideas that are extremely important to working with learners with special needs, such as sensitivity to different learning styles, the incorporation of many senses into learning, and the importance of review and self assessment. Through working on this grant, we have realized that, in addition to the supplemental training, we can increase the tutor's understanding of learners with special needs by stressing these ideas more within the framework of the basic tutor training. After all, learners with special needs do not require massively different treatment than other adult learners. However, this treatment and these services are more crucial to the special needs learner's success.

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The following is a list of topics covered at the MSLC Basic Tutor training Workshop. The areas in which one might place extra emphasis on tutoring learners with special needs are in boldface.

### **Characteristics of Adult Learners**

Characteristics of a Good Tutor

### **Goals of Adult Learners**

Strategies of a Good Reader

### **The Language Experience**

The Fry Word List

The Discovery Method

### **Multiple Intelligence Theory**

Flash Card Drills and Games

### **Assisted Reading**

CLOZE Exercises, Written

CLOZE Exercises, Oral

### **DRTA (Direct Reading and Thinking Activity) \***

Questioning Exercises

Listening Exercises

### **Process Writing, Journals, and Portfolios**

Understanding the IEP

### **Learner Materials**

### **Making Your Own Materials**

### **Developing a Lesson Plan**

### **Assessing Your Lesson**

Tutor Monthly Reports

\* This exercise is also known as BDA (Before, During, and After) and KWL (What I Know, what I Want to know and what I have Learned).

Many volunteers assume that all adult learners will have some ability to read a passage of text. During basic tutor training, it is important to use examples of

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learner goals, tutoring techniques, and lesson planning which accurately demonstrate the level of beginning learners. If all of the examples you use are on the third grade level or above, the volunteers will be misled to believe that all adult learners are at this level. Remember to include ideas for working with the alphabet. Remind the volunteers that listening comprehension is a building block for reading and reading comprehension. Use writing samples from a variety of learners to demonstrate the range of abilities. As you develop your own Supplemental Special Needs Training, you will decide which of these ideas and activities to use in your basic training and which to save for your Special Needs training.

## Training Agendas

The following pages contain three different possible agendas for your Special Needs Training Workshop. Each agenda was designed by a different staff member within the MSLC program, so each agenda takes a slightly different approach to presentation and content. As you read through the agendas, we hope that you will start thinking about what portions of our training will be valuable to your tutors, your learners, and your program. Once you have chosen the areas you wish to include, simply turn to the appropriate chapter for more detailed explanations (You can find more information on the **boldface** items in the agendas later in this handbook.)

## **Special Needs Training Agenda I**

Developed by Barb Beck

This training was designed to provide tutors with both the philosophical approach as well as hands-on ideas about how to address their learning partners' needs. This training was given to experienced tutors who had been matched with learners with special needs for quite a while.

- I Introduction
- II. Discussion of learners who are developmentally disabled
  - A. Definition
  - B. Behavioral characteristics
  - C. Learning characteristics
- III. Expectations
  - A. Likeness and differences to working with other types of learners
  - B. Expectation changes
- IV. How to work with adults with developmental disabilities
  - A. **Video: Teaching Daily Living Skills** (See Chapter Eight)
    - 1. Key rules (6:30-9:79 on video)
      - a. Teach skill in natural setting
      - b. Provide frequent informal learning opportunities
      - c. Question to have learner tell you what he or she knows
    - 2. Obstacles and how to handle them (9:90-18:81 on video)
      - a. Learner difficulty understanding abstract concepts
      - b. Limited learner memory
      - c. Poor communications skills
    - 3. Instructional methods, general (23:80-27:28 on video)
      - a. Demonstration by tutor model
- V. **Teaching Ideas and Activities** (B-G can be found in the Idea Book, See Chapter Ten)
  - A. Tutor Profiles
  - B. Letter Writing
  - C. Configuration (Word Shapes)
  - D. Color Writing
  - E. Touch Math
  - F. Whole Word Approach
  - G. Word Families
- VI. **Sensitivity Exercises** (See Chapter Seven)
- VII. **Questions and Evaluation** (See Appendix A)

## **Special Needs Training Agenda II**

Developed by Gaie Wilt

This agenda takes a philosophical approach. This training was designed to encourage the tutors to work together to find their own definition of "special needs" as well as their own solutions to the learning/tutoring obstacles that they encounter with their partners. This training was given to experienced tutors who had been working with a learner with special needs for an extended period of time.

- I. Introduction of participants
- II. Philosophy and purpose statement: Designed by trainer as an overall explanation of the program's philosophy and the purpose of the training.
- III. Discussion Questions Activity (See Chapter Six)
- IV. Information and concerns sharing: Trainer facilitates discussion of learning partners and their specific needs as well as the methods the tutors are currently using.
  - A. Answer questions regarding methodologies
  - B. Discuss learner/tutor profiles: Tutor Profiles were written by other volunteer tutors. They are brief descriptions of the tutor/learner pairs and explanations of several of the learning activities used by each pair.
  - C. Methodologies that work for you and your learning partner
- IV. Video : Teaching Daily Living Skills (See Chapter Eight)
  - A. Watch segments of the video and discuss issues and concerns
  - B. What works and what doesn't
- V. Closing
  - Encourage tutor participation in developing more profiles
  - Take questions
- VI. Evaluations (See Appendix A)

## **Special Needs Training Agenda III**

Developed by Shelby McClintock

This training agenda was developed later in the year, after the Idea Book was partially completed. It therefore incorporates a discussion of the Idea Book and an explanation of how to use it. In addition, we video taped some of the tutors (who attended the earlier trainings) in action and included that tape in this training. Finally, this training was designed for a group of tutors who may or may not be currently matched with a learner with special needs.

- I. **Sensitivity Exercises and Discussion (See Chapter Seven)**
  - A. **Single Sense Exercise**
  - B. **Moving Text Exercise**
- II. **Introductions**
  - A. **Confidentiality Discussion:** Trainer discusses the importance of maintaining learner confidentiality while discussing the tutoring experience.
  - B. **Tutor name and description of learning partner**
  - C. **What each participant wants to learn about at this training**
- III. **Group Activity: Discussion Questions (See Chapter Six)**
- IV. **Video Tape of MSLC learners and tutors working together (See Chapter Eight)**
  - A. **Viewing**
  - B. **Discussion**
- V. **Idea Book (See Chapter Ten)**
  - A. **Share ideas we have to solve problems we have already discussed**
  - B. **Review format of Idea Book (See Chapter Ten)**
  - C. **Group Activity:**  
Assign each group a fictional learning partner and some learning characteristics. Ask them to demonstrate several Idea Book activities they might choose for this learner. (You may want to restrict them to one section, such as pre-reading.)
  - D. **Whole group discussion of Idea Book and its use**
- VI. **Questions, Evaluation and Closing (See Appendix A)**



## **Discussion Questions**

Developed by Gaie Wilt

1. What do these terms mean to you?

Developmental Disabilities

Special Needs

2A. List all of the descriptions, both negative and positive, you can think of that have to do with people who have developmental disabilities.

2B. Discuss what sort of person each description may lead you to expect. How much does each description affect an individual who is described that way?

2C. How would your description reflect your own beliefs when dealing with that individual?

3. Think of a description of "people who have developmental disabilities" that would A) allow you to discuss that group in a meaningful way with a person outside the field and B) not offend or harm any individual in the group you are describing.

4. Have you ever experienced social barriers to your full participation in your own community? How did you feel and how did you overcome the barrier(s)?

5. How do your expectations of others, particularly those with developmental disabilities, influence your behavior toward them? How would these expectations impact upon your interaction with those individuals?

## Sensitivity Exercises

Remember when working with sensitivity exercises to do the activity first, then discuss it. Your objective is to evoke emotion and thought from your participants first, and then lead them to the proper conclusion. If you begin by explaining what you are trying to do and why, it will be much less effective.

### *Frustration Exercises*

These exercises are designed to help your volunteers identify with the feelings of frustration that many adult learners experience. They are good for beginning discussion, breaking the ice at the beginning of your workshop, and helping volunteers begin to understand the adults they will be tutoring.

- A. Single Sense Exercise
- B. Fashul Expreshuns
- C. Symbols or Code
- D. Advanced Reading
- E. Draw a Quality

### *Specific Disability Exercises*

These exercises are designed to help you demonstrate what it feels like to have a specific disability. Some of the disabilities addressed are physical, and some are learning disabilities that are sometimes more difficult to understand.

If you can, try to have each participant do one of the physical disability exercises for an extended period of time between training sessions (one or two hours at night, or even for an entire day). This will heighten the effects of these exercises.

#### F. Vision:

- 1. Star and Mirror Exercise
- 2. Vaseline
- 3. Moving Text

#### G. Hearing: Cotton and Oil

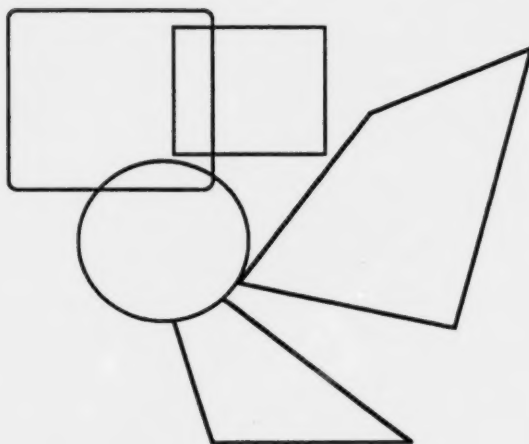
#### H. Dexterity

- 1. Tied Hands
- 2. Wrong Scissors
- 3. Opposite Hand

### *Frustration Exercises*

**A. Single Sense:** This exercise helps participants to develop an understanding of not being able to use all of their senses to complete a task. Because adult learners cannot rely on visual, written information, it is sometimes as if they have one less sense to work with.

Draw a diagram using randomly placed geometric objects.  
Photocopy it onto thick colored paper (so it is not see-through).



**Divide your group into pairs.** Give the diagram to one of the partners and instruct him or her to *keep the other partner from seeing the diagram*. Give the second partner a blank piece of paper and a pencil.

**Give the group the following instructions:**

One of you is the listener (with the blank paper). You cannot talk.  
One of you is the speaker (with the diagram). You can talk, but you cannot repeat yourself. You cannot tell the listener if he or she is correct or not. The Speaker should give directions to the Listener and together you should recreate the diagram that the Speaker has. The Listener is not allowed to see the diagram.

How did the Listener Feel? How did the Speaker feel? As a tutor, how will you deal with the frustration your learning partner may experience?

**B. Fashul Ekspreshuns:** This exercise helps participants understand that phonics does not always work. This is especially helpful for experienced tutors who have worked with the Laubach or other phonics oriented systems. It is important that volunteers understand that not all learners will be able to understand the phonetic system.

**Choose a passage from a magazine and write it out in phonetic spelling.** Try to be inconsistent with spelling patterns (see example below).

**Make a copy for each participant but ask one person to read it aloud.** (Do not give him or her any time to analyze the spelling patterns.)

Here is an example passage:

**Fashul Eckspretions and Hed Moovmints \***

can yu tel how sumwun feals ubowt yu bi reeding boddi langwij? authoryteas klame yu cann frum thu luuk uv skorne,, however phleting, too thu suttle nods and brite ize that sae sumwum iz reeseptyv too yor thauts.

katee, cevintene, sez, "mi frends muthir duznt like mee. i no she duznt." i askt katee whi she thaut this. "well, for wun thing, she duznt luuk at mee when i tawk to hir." katee ecksplaned. "she luuks uwae tord thu dor or ukros thu rume, as thoe she wonts too escaip. and sumtumes she looks at mee as if too sae, 'yu liik phunnie in those klose.' i ges its thu wae hir ize luuk cold and hir lips are presst toogethir. she duznt nede too saw wun negutive werd too mee." thu muthirs boddi langwij had sent u messij lowd and klere.

emmajin u luuk ov mokkirie on your fais. teeth kum toogethir, lips kloze with u slite downwerd tirn. uzuhuly we are kwik to eerace such a luk frum owr fais beefor uthers see owr inner thauts. if yu are obzirvint, thoe, yu mae lirn too kach all mening beehind thu mask peepul ware - or think thae ware. as yu beekum moar in toon with boddi cumunicaissions, yu will noe wen too give yor frends or yur perints u wide burth. yu will spot thu times peepul are tens. yu will aulsoe beeginn to understan yor one boddi langwij, too bee uwair uv whut messijez yu send.

\* Rewritten by Bille Norman from Understanding Body Talk, by McGough

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The reader will probably (hopefully) stumble a bit over the words. Once he or she is finished, discuss how it felt and how it sounded with the group. Talk about the phonetic patterns and how they make sense, but were still incorrect. Talk about the many different ways to pronounce one letter pattern (such as ough in rough, thought, and although). This activity can also be used in support of experimental spelling.

**C. Symbols and Codes:** This exercise helps participants understand how frustrating it is to look at something and not understand it.

**Write a paragraph in all symbols, or in letters that are constructed out of a random code.** (M = D, B = Q, \$ = A, or # = K). You can use a foreign language if you are certain none of your participants will know it. We find the symbol codes more effective, because foreign languages still have similarities to English (unless they use a different alphabet, like Russian, or Japanese).

**Give a copy of your paragraph to each participant.**

Tell your group that they will not be able to continue in the training if they cannot figure out what this message says. **Be very serious.** (Imagine yourself as the insensitive assistance officer telling a non-reader to complete this form and that form and...) Put the pressure on and try to make your participants feel uncomfortable. As soon as they start to sweat, you have done your job!

Prepare discussion questions to ask the group. How did this make them feel? Why did they feel that way? What did they want to do? How is this like not being able to read?

**D. Advanced Reading:** This exercise helps participants to understand that reading ability is on a continuum. It challenges their definition of literacy and helps them to feel the frustration of "reading" (going through the process of saying the words on a page) but not understanding.

**Choose a highly technical and complicated text for your group to read.** Copy one or two pages of the text. Medical journals, complicated mechanic instructions, philosophy texts, and almost all law texts are good for this exercise.

**Give your participants a limited amount of time to read the text.** You might time yourself on one reading (no review or pauses to reread a passage) to determine an appropriate time.

**Have several questions prepared to ask them about the text.** After you have asked several questions, to specific people, ask the group why they did not understand it? They can read, can't they? What is their problem?

You might even want to have someone read a passage out loud to demonstrate that he or she can read it. Then ask the questions again. Why is this so difficult for them? Are they stupid?

We all know that it takes practice and some background knowledge to decipher a complicated, highly specific text. However, we tend to forget that this same idea applies to reading in general. This exercise will open all types of discussion on language, literacy and reading.

**E. Draw A Quality:** This exercise helps participants understand how frustrating it is to be asked to use a sense or learning style that you are not comfortable with.

Give each participant a piece of paper and crayons. **Ask them to draw a picture of a characteristic** that will make them a good tutor.

**Have each participant stand up and explain his or her illustration to the rest of the group.** Some will be quite good. Some will be quite poor.

Ask the group how that felt. Ask someone who had a weaker illustration. Talk about using hands in learning. Talk about creativity. Is it hard to be creative? Does it get easier as you do it more often? Will they remember this activity more than reading a paragraph of their training manual? Why?



## *Specific Disability Exercises*

### **F. Vision Exercises**

**1. Star and Mirror :** This exercise helps participants feel the frustration of having dysgraphia and other motor perceptual learning disabilities.

**Draw a star on a sheet of paper. Draw another star inside the first one, so that you have about 1/3" space between the stars.**



**Place a hand mirror (rectangular ones work best) on the table on its edge.**

**Lay the star drawing in front of the mirror.**

**Place an empty cereal box in front of the paper so that the stars can only be seen by looking into the mirror.**

**Now follow the lines and draw a third star in between the two already on the paper! You can also use blank paper and just have the volunteers try to write a sentence.**

Why is this so difficult? What did you try to do to compensate for your "disability"? What things in your life would be difficult to do if you had this type of disability? How would you deal with that?



**2. Vaseline:** This exercise is designed to help participants understand what it is like to have extremely poor, uncorrectable vision.

**Borrow pairs of glasses from the Lion's Club in your area.**

**Have each participant rub Vaseline on the lenses of a pair of glasses.**

**Give them a piece of reading material and ask them to read it.**

Encourage them to try this for an hour at home, and write about how it made them feel when they are done. Then you can share responses at the next training session.

**3. Moving Text:** This exercise helps participants understand what it is like to have a visual discrimination disability that creates the image of moving text.

**Make two overheads of an easy to read, large print passage.**

**Tape one to the overhead projector screen so it will stay in place.**

**Place the second on top of the first, and move it in a small circle around the original text. Ask your participants to read it.**

Soon they will feel a bit dizzy from trying to follow your movements. How did this feel? What tasks would be difficult to accomplish with this type of disability? What kind of coping techniques might you develop if you had this type of disability? How would this disability make you feel about yourself?

## **G. Hearing Exercise**

This exercise tries to model the feeling of poor hearing or limited listening skills.

**Give each participant two cotton balls that have been dipped lightly in baby oil. Divide your group into pairs.**

**Have them place the cotton balls in their ears.** Remind them not to put the cotton balls in too far.

**Give them directions to follow.** The directions can be for any kind of activity. **Make sure you talk in your normal voice.** Do not speak louder or more slowly. Give them a moderate, but not generous, amount of time to complete the task.

Have them take the cotton balls out of their ears. Talk about how it felt to not be able to hear things accurately. Talk about what they would do to cope with that disability. Discuss how a hearing problem would make it difficult to learn to read.

This is also a good exercise to have your participants do at home.

## **H. Dexterity Exercises**

These exercises are meant to help participants understand what it is like to have a physical disability. You can have participants do one or more of these exercises at home in between your sessions, or you can include the exercises into the body of your workshop.

### **1. Tied Hands**

**Tie the writing hand of participants behind their backs. Give them a task that requires manual dexterity to complete.** Do not allow them to work together on this task. Discuss how this limitation effects their ability to complete the task.

You can also tie both hands together behind their back or in front. This will make it much more difficult!

### **2. Wrong Scissors**

Have a relatively complex design for your participants to cut out of paper. Give them scissors that are the opposite of what they need (give a right-handed person lefty scissors, etc.). Give them a brief period of time to complete the task. Discuss how it made them feel.

### 3. Opposite Hand

Wrap each participant's writing hand in an ace bandage for a portion of your workshop. You can give them specific tasks to complete, or you can continue with your workshop and let them struggle! Discuss how this made them feel. Discuss what types of activities they would no longer be able to do with ease. Talk about how this would affect reading, writing and learning in general.

## Training Videos

We used the video "Teaching Daily Living Skills" in all but one of the trainings for this grant. This video was chosen because it deals with many of the difficult issues that arise when volunteers are working with learners who have developmental disabilities, such as communication problems, unusual behavior patterns, and obstacles to learning. This video, however, is oriented more toward staff who would be working in a group home or a program for independent living. We therefore used only portions of the video, and we encouraged the tutors to comment on the video and its usefulness.

As the year went on, we were able to video tape several of the volunteers who work with developmentally disabled learners in action. We used a home video camera and a tripod to tape several short examples of lesson activities (one or two minutes for each activity at most). The tutors provided short background explanations of their learning partners and the development of the activities they use.

In future trainings, we will use this video to show volunteers the methods some tutors use, as well as to prompt discussion about behavior patterns, communication difficulties, and learning obstacles. We strongly recommend that you consider producing a similar video tape for your program. It is inexpensive and you will be able to chose a selection of tutors, learners, and lesson activities that best represent your program at work.

### **"Teaching Daily Living Skills"**

Joel M. Levy, Director  
Young Adult Institute  
460 West 34th Street  
New York, NY 10001

For information on the videotapes available through Laubach Literacy Action, write to:

**Laubach Literacy Action**  
Information Center  
Attention: Phyllis Heukrath  
1320 Jamesville Avenue  
Syracuse, NY 13210

## **Text and Workbook Suggestions**

These are some of the texts and workbooks that we recommend making available to yourself and your volunteer tutors. All of the items in this list have a complete bibliography in the Project Bibliography section of this handbook.

LitStart

How Adults Read

Person to Person: A Guide to Professionals  
Working with People with Disabilities

Teaching Daily Living Skills to Adults  
with Mental Retardation

Reading for Today 1

I Wish I Could Write

Honoring Diversity

Read It: A New Approach for Adult Readers

A Picture is Worth 1000 Words

The Breakthrough to Math Series

Handsigns: A Sign Language Alphabet

For more suggestions on curriculum materials, see Meeting the Needs of the Low-Level Reader, PDE Project #99-2010.

## The Idea Book Concept

The Idea Book is designed to be easy to use, adaptable to a variety of ability levels, and comprehensive. It is not meant to be read from cover to cover, although some tutors may want to approach it that way. Our concept of the idea book arose from the theory of the many intelligences (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, musical or rhythmic, spatial, etc.) and the importance of incorporating many senses into the learning process. In addition, we concentrated on seven categories which our learners and tutors felt were most important to achieving the goals set by the learners and to meeting the every day needs expressed by the learners. The seven categories are as follows:

Pre-Reading

Reading

Writing

Speaking and Listening

Math, Measurement and Money

Self Esteem and Motivation

Life Skills

Each category has its own section with activities that pertain to its topic. Some activities fall into several categories, but each activity is listed under the category it is most related to. For example, Music Writing is an exercise in the Writing Section of the Idea Book. This same idea, playing quiet music in the background to ease writing related tension, could be applied to reading as well. However, since its primary focus is on writing, this activity is located in the writing section.

In addition, each activity page includes suggested modifications: possible ways either to make the activity more or less difficult, or to incorporate additional senses and intelligences. We hope that these suggested modifications will serve as models and help tutors develop the ability to make these modifications (specific to their learning partner's needs) themselves.

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Once you have chosen what type of activity you want to look for, you then can choose which of your learning partner's senses, or learning strengths you want to use. Each activity page has symbols in the upper right-hand corner. These symbols are meant to help tutors find activities which will stimulate the senses they wish to use. The symbols are as follows:



The hand indicates that this activity uses touch, motion, or both.



This pattern indicates that this activity uses visual/spatial relationships



The eye indicates that this is a visual activity, usually involving text, letters, or symbols of some kind.



The ear indicates that this activity involves listening skills.



The mouth indicates that this activity will involve speaking, conversation, or reading out loud.



The musical notes indicate that this activity uses rhythm or music.

There are two sets of symbols on each page, separated by a horizontal line. The symbols above the line describe the senses used in the primary activity. The symbols below the line describe the senses used in the modifications. This system allows tutors to flip through each category and find the activities which serve their needs quickly and easily.



## How to Use the Idea Book

There are two ways you can incorporate the Idea Book into your current literacy program. You can either give each tutor a personal copy, or you can make copies of specific activities for each tutor as you feel necessary. There are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches. Let us discuss the later approach first.

The idea of giving individual pages to volunteer tutors as they are needed is appealing for several reasons. First, your volunteers won't feel overwhelmed by the quantity of information in the book; they will only receive a little bit at a time. Second, you have control over which methods you are suggesting to each volunteer. Third, it is less expensive to copy a few pages for each volunteer than to make a copy of the entire book for each volunteer.

For this approach to work effectively, however, you must already have developed a system of regular communication between you and your volunteers, whether it is a monthly phone call or a written report. If you do not know what they are doing on a regular and frequent basis, you cannot recommend methods or activities. In addition, these conversations and reports must be detailed enough that you can obtain information on the problems the volunteers are having, the other methods they are trying, and the successes they are experiencing. For programs where the volunteers are meeting in your office, this may be a minor obstacle. For programs where the volunteers are scattered across several counties, however, this communication can be difficult to achieve.

This leads us to some of the advantages of the first approach: making a copy of the Idea Book for each volunteer. It give the volunteers complete access to all of the information they may potentially use. It allows them to make decisions about what activities might help, and they don't have to wait until the end of the month. They can use the Idea Book for the planning of every lesson. This approach encourages more variation in the lessons, as well as a more immediate reaction to the needs of the learner. The drawback to this approach is that the

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volunteers will need help understanding the Idea Book, how to use it, and how to know which activities to try. We can't just hand 50 pages of new information to a volunteer and say "Go to it!" To effectively incorporate this Idea Book into your program, you need to have an orientation to the ideas behind it, and the activities in it. Of course if you are planning a supplemental training, you can include this instruction in your workshop. Otherwise you might have a mini-training, an update session, or an in-service day for your volunteer tutors.

If it is possible for you, we strongly recommend the second approach to incorporating the Idea Book into your program. Your volunteers are talented, intelligent people. With your guidance, they will be able to use this information skillfully, and the learners will benefit from the tutors' access to it. Helping your volunteers learn to assess their learning partner's needs will make them stronger and more confident tutors. If you already teach this in your current training, this Idea Book instruction will help to emphasize the importance of continual assessment, both of the learner's progress and the tutor's methods.

## **Suggestions for Idea Book Presentation**

Perhaps the most important aspect of your presentation is that you have a clear understanding of how you would like this Idea Book to fit into your already existing program. You may decide to use it with all of your tutors, or you may wish to only use it with those tutors who are working with adults who have special needs. Either way, you will be able to decide who to present the Idea Book to and when.

Once you have determined the audience and setting for your presentation of the Idea Book, it may help you to familiarize yourself with the theory of multiple intelligences. We recommend Honoring Diversity, from the California State Library Foundation (see Project Bibliography) as it is an excellent and concise overview of this theory as it applies specifically to adult education. The next step is to prepare a brief presentation on this theory, or the theory behind your program and how that applies to the use of the Idea Book.

A simple discussion of the different intelligences and how they are involved in learning will do. Remember, however, to emphasize the research support for the lesser known intelligences such as the musical or rhythmic intelligence, and the spatial intelligence. It may take a bit of convincing to make believers out of your tutors. It is imperative that they do believe, though, or they will only try activities that use some intelligences, and their learning partners may suffer as a result.

Once you have discussed the use of multiple intelligences in learning, you are ready to present some of the activities in the book. Choose one or two of the more unusual exercises and develop group activities to go along with them. Remember that tutors will tend to fall back on methods and activities which are similar to the ones they experienced in school. These methods, however, are often the ones that were not effective for adult learners when they were in school as children. Design your group activities to stress the benefits of using alternative (other than visual) intelligences and different activities.

Once you have presented a sample of the Idea Book activities, explain the layout of the Idea Book. You may want to provide a copy of the "Concept of the Idea Book" section found earlier in this handbook. Once your audience seems to understand, we recommend breaking the participants into groups, and giving them a description of a learning "situation." Explain the strengths and weaknesses of the fictional learner and the task that learner wants to accomplish. Ask each group to choose 3 activities from the Idea Book they might try during a lesson with that learner. As each group walks through this process your workshop participants will develop a strong understanding of the Idea Book and how it works.

## **Volunteer Support**

Because the volunteer tutors who are working with exceptional learners face a somewhat greater challenge than other tutors, increased support will help these tutors feel successful, get new ideas, and hopefully, stay involved. MSLC has developed several support services to assist these tutors from the time of training on.

### **The Individual Education Plan**

Each learner is assessed thoroughly and an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is written by the staff member who performed the assessment. In addition to detailing the adult's learning strengths and weaknesses, the IEP contains suggestions for specific methods and materials to use with this particular learner. These methods, which were taught at the Basic Tutor Training Workshop, are presented in a way specific to the learner and his or her strengths. This helps the volunteer tutor know where to begin.

### **The Pre-Match Meeting**

Before the tutor and learner meet for the first time, the tutor and Field Supervisor meet to discuss the learner's IEP and the recommended methods and materials. This meeting gives the tutor the opportunity to ask questions, and the Field Supervisor can practice several techniques with the tutor. This meeting also provides the tutor an opportunity to voice concerns or apprehensions and receive support and reassurance from the staff person.

### **The Post-Match Observation**

[This observation was initiated as part of this 353 Grant project and was found to be extremely effective. It is now part of the process for all adult learners who enter the MSLC program, not only those with special needs.]

## MSLC Trainer Handbook

After the tutor and the learner are matched, the "Critical Period" begins. In approximately the first four to six weeks, the patterns for the match are set. If attendance is good during this time, it will most likely remain good. If the tutor and learner become comfortable with each other, they will remain committed to helping each other. Similarly, if either the tutor or the learner has fears, doubts, or concerns that go un-addressed, the match will inevitably fail.

After the tutor and the learner have met for several weeks, a staff person (preferably the same staff person that performed the original learner assessment and the pre-match meeting) schedules a lesson observation. It is best for this observation to occur at the pair's regular meeting time and place. Of course, this is not always possible. The staff person observes all or part of the lesson and evaluates the following aspects:

*Materials and Methods:* Are they using the most appropriate materials? Is the learner interested in the texts? Are the materials and methods being used appropriately by the tutor? Are there any methods that the tutor is not using that would enhance the lessons? These questions and more can help staff evaluate the need for different methods or supplemental materials.

*Tutor/Learner Relationship:* Do the tutor and the learner seem to feel comfortable with each other? Does the tutor encourage and praise the learner during the lesson? Does the learner feel comfortable asking questions? Is there a mutual respect between the tutor and the learner?

*Attendance:* What has tutor and learner attendance been like? If lessons have been canceled, who was responsible? Was the lesson rescheduled or just skipped? If there have been many lessons missed, is the time, location, or day of the lesson causing the problem? It is vital to stop poor attendance patterns before they become a habit.



*Goal Setting and Progress:* Are the tutor and the learner setting goals together? Are the goals realistic? Long term? Short term? Do they have the material needed to fulfill these goals? Is the tutor helping the learner see his or her progress? Is there review of the learned material at each lesson? How much control does the learner have over his or her goal setting, lesson planning, and learning?

After these items have been observed and evaluated, the staff person can review useful techniques, teach new methods, supply additional or different materials, and discuss any questions, problems or concerns with the tutor and the learner. This can be done individually or with the pair together. The staff person can also model new activities for the tutor and the learner. More difficult issues, such as attendance or attitude problems, should be addressed individually.

**The most important idea behind the Post Match Observation is support and acknowledgment of the work the learner and the tutor are doing together.** This is an excellent opportunity to pat both the learner and the tutor on the back, praise them for their hard work, compliment the innovative methods they are using, and most importantly, help them feel good about what they are doing. This will help the volunteer feel important and useful. It will help reassure the learner that he or she is learning. An additional and unexpected benefit of these Post Match Observations has been our volunteers, having a greater sense that the MSLC staff will respond to their questions and concerns, started writing more detailed and thorough monthly reports with many questions and comments on their lessons and their partner's progress. Increased communication between the volunteers and the staff has helped us provide better and more personalized instruction for the adult learners in the Mid-State Literacy Council program.



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## Appendix A

Forms included in this appendix are as follows:

1. Supplemental Training Workshop Evaluation
2. Referral Agreement
3. Referral Questionnaire

## Special Needs Supplemental Training Workshop

### Evaluation

Developed by Gaie Wilt

Name of Trainer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Training: \_\_\_\_\_

Please observe the trainer(s) and critique the methods of instruction used by marking the training procedures below. Mark + for well done, - for poorly done, and 0 for not done. Please write suggestions for improvement for any parts of the training you feel have not been well done.

1. The trainer(s) developed rapport with workshop participants by:
  - \_\_\_ a. greeting individuals and group
  - \_\_\_ b. conversing with individuals
  - \_\_\_ c. calling people by name
  - \_\_\_ d. encouraging and praising participants
2. The trainer(s) obtained and maintained the attention of participants by
  - \_\_\_ a. asking questions
  - \_\_\_ b. citing rationale, research, or experience to support ideas presented
  - \_\_\_ c. controlling distractions
  - \_\_\_ d. scheduling session length and breaks
3. The trainer(s) presented relevant information which is:
  - \_\_\_ a. new to me
  - \_\_\_ b. reinforcing of previously known information
  - \_\_\_ c. useful to my current tutoring
  - \_\_\_ d. useful to my future tutoring
4. The trainer(s) clearly presented information by using:
  - \_\_\_ a. audio, visual equipment (VCR, overheads, tapes, etc.)
  - \_\_\_ b. charts, handouts and/or a blackboard
  - \_\_\_ c. demonstrations and activities
5. The trainer(s) ensured application of information by providing:
  - \_\_\_ a. discussion of applications
  - \_\_\_ b. encouragement and recognition for effort
  - \_\_\_ c. supervision

Please write any additional comments you have below. Feel free to use the back of the page. Thank you for your comments and your time!

## Referral Agreement

MSLC would like to work closely with your agency to better serve all the individuals we both work with. In order to achieve this coordination of services as efficiently and thoroughly as possible, Mid-State Literacy Council and

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agree to the following guidelines and procedures for client/learner referrals.

### Referral from Mid-State Literacy Council

1. MSLC will refer adult learners to the above agency only when the learner has signed a release form. In most cases, the learner will be provided with information about the above agency and encouraged to seek out services independently.
2. MSLC will provide the above agency with information about an adult learner's educational activities and progress only when the adult has signed a release form. Updates about learner progress will be provided on a quarterly basis if requested.
3. Other requirements of the above agency should be listed here:

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## Referral to Mid-State Literacy Council

1. MSLC will accept direct referrals from the above agency; however, MSLC prefers that the potential learner be given information about MSLC services and encouraged to seek our services independently. MSLC's guidelines for referral are as follows:

A. MSLC cannot accept any crisis situation referrals.

B. MSLC cannot serve adults who exhibit threatening or inappropriate behaviors.

C. All new learners at MSLC go through a trial period of three months. A participant in the MSLC program must adhere to the terms in the Learner Contract. At the end of this trial period, there will be a reevaluation meeting with all persons concerned if problems have occurred. The adults continued involvement with the MSLC program will then be determined.

2. MSLC will provide the above agency with flyers and handouts which describe the MSLC program and explain how a potential learner might contact MSLC.

3. At the request of the above agency, MSLC will orient staff on the following issues: how to recognize a non-reader, how to successfully approach the issue of improving reading ability, how to accurately explain MSLC services, and how to successfully refer the adult to MSLC.

4. MSLC and the above agency will work together to help the adult set reasonable and appropriate learning goals. As part of this coordination or services, MSLC will:

A. request any assessment or evaluation material available on any adult referred to MSLC. MSLC will provide release forms if necessary.

B. provide above agency with information on the adult learner's educational activity and progress when the release forms have been signed.

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MSLC Staff Signature

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Agency Staff Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mid-State Literacy Council  
Referral Questionnaire**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Referral: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Referral: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment or evaluation information (attach if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_

Will this person be able to meet in a public site? (Does he or she need child care, transportation, etc.?) \_\_\_\_\_

Does this person have any behavior patterns that MSLC should be aware of when matching him or her with a volunteer? \_\_\_\_\_

What services is this person receiving from your agency? \_\_\_\_\_

What skills are you hoping MSLC can help this person develop? (Please be specific.) What are your agency's goals for this individual? \_\_\_\_\_

## Curriculum for Learners With Developmental Disabilities 353 Project Evaluation

Please take some time to complete this evaluation and return it to us. We appreciate your input and are hoping to use your comments to make improvements on the materials included in this grant.

How did you learn about the project materials?

What were you hoping these materials would do for your program?

Did these materials fulfill your needs? Why or why not?

Please rate the following on a scale of 1 to 5 (1= excellent, 3=good, 5=poor).

Quality of Idea Book \_\_\_\_\_  
Quality of Trainer Guide \_\_\_\_\_  
Usefulness to Your Program \_\_\_\_\_  
Quality of Overall Writing \_\_\_\_\_  
Relevance to Field (of Adult Education) \_\_\_\_\_  
Layout and Design of Products \_\_\_\_\_  
Adaptability \_\_\_\_\_

Please give suggestions for improvement for those categories which you rated 3 or above.

Thank you for your input!

Please return this to:      Mid-State Literacy Council  
204 Calder Way Suite 306  
State College, PA 16801



# Mid-State Literacy Council

## Idea Book for Volunteer Tutors

Compiled by Mid-State Literacy Council Staff and Volunteers  
Written by Shelby McClintock

a part of the  
Curriculum for Learners with Developmental Disabilities  
Pennsylvania Department of Education 353 Project # 98-4015

# Mid-State Literacy Council Idea Book

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# Pre-Reading

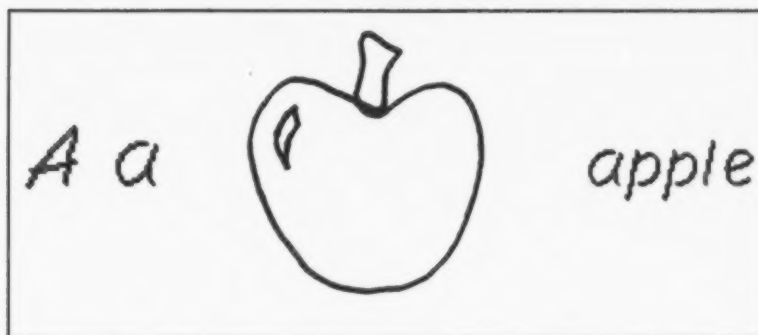


# Alphabet Cards

**Purpose:** To use many senses when teaching the alphabet and to help learners make the connection between letter symbols and letter sounds.

**Directions:** Make a 5 x 7 card for each letter of the alphabet. Each card should include the following:

1. The letter in capital and lower case
2. A picture of something that starts with the letter  
It is fun to let the learner pick these items, but the next page has some suggestions in case you get stuck.
3. The word that the picture represents



Have the learner say the letter name and then the name of the object on the card. Help him or her identify the sound of the letter and understand how it is different from the way we say the letters in the alphabet. Have the learner trace the letter while saying the letter sound.

## Modifications

A. You and your partner can make word cards in a similar fashion. Draw a picture that represents the word. Draw the shape around the word (see Word Shapes). Have the learner choose a sentence using the word to go on the card.

B. You can use magazines to cut out pictures of the objects you chose. This gives the beginning learner the opportunity to use an adult piece of reading material.

**Materials:** 5 x 7 unlined flashcards, markers or pens; Modification B: magazines, scissors and glue.

# Alphabet Cards

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| A | apple, ant; ace, age     |
| B | ball, book, boy, blue    |
| C | cat, carrot, car         |
| D | dog, daisy, doll         |
| E | elephant, eye; ear, eat  |
| F | flower, frog, finger     |
| G | girl, goat, green        |
| H | hat, horse, house        |
| I | ice cream; Indian        |
| J | jacks, jet, jellybean    |
| K | kite, king, kind         |
| L | lollypop, lemon          |
| M | mouse, mop, mellon       |
| N | net, nose                |
| O | Oreo, orange; ocean      |
| P | peanut, pot, purple      |
| Q | queen, quick, quiet      |
| R | rabbit, red, ring        |
| S | sun, smile, snake        |
| T | tea, tree, table         |
| U | umbrella, under; unicorn |
| V | violet, violin, vice     |
| W | window, water, wave      |
| X | x-ray                    |
| Y | yellow, yarn, yam        |
| Z | zebra, Zenith (TV)       |



# Sign Language

**Purpose:** To incorporate the sense of touch and motion into the learning of letters. Sign language sometimes offers a fresh approach to something the learner has tried to learn in other ways. This approach can be successful regardless of the presence of visual or auditory disabilities. Learning sign language tends to help learners who are good with their hands.

**Directions:** Use the following page of the sign language alphabet to teach your learning partner and yourself sign language. Do not try to learn all the letters at once! Try to talk about how the sign looks. Does it look like the letter? Why or why not? How does each sign feel? Is it easy to make? As you learn the signs, say the letters and their sounds. You can use your Alphabet Cards to help!



A



B



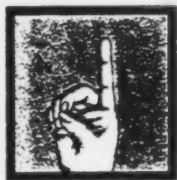
C

## Modifications

- A. Once you have learned the alphabet, try spelling in sign language. Some learners can feel the right spelling.
- B. You can have a conversation in sign language. Spell a word, then hold your hand flat and move it across the plane in front of you to signify a new word.

**Materials:** For this activity you only need the sign language sheet and your hands!

Dd



Ee



Ff



Gg



Hh



Ii



Jj



Kk



Ll



Mm



Nn



Oo



Pp



Qq



Rr



Ss



Tt



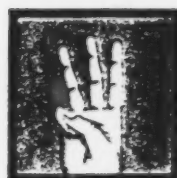
Uu



Vv



Ww



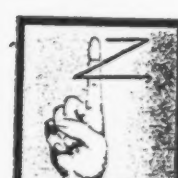
Xx



Yy



Zz





# Letter Tracing

**Purpose:** To include another sense in the learning of letters. To help learners who have discrimination problems. Remember when working with the alphabet that lower case letters are used much more often, so concentrate on those first.

**Directions:** Make a large alphabet in upper and lower case, using one piece of 8 1/2 x 11 paper for each letter.

Place the letter over a piece of sandpaper. Have your learning partner trace the letter while saying it.

## Modifications

- A. Use a bowl of rice or sand to write the letters in.
- B. Use a piece of string to make the letter shape. With your partner, glue it onto cardboard and trace the string letter with a finger.
- C. Have your partner make the shape of the letter with his or her body.
- D. Use a chalk board and have your partner trace the letter. Using the whole board will involve large motor skills.
- E. Write the letters in the ground with your toes.
- F. Walk in the shape of the letter.
- G. Trace whole words and sentences.

As you can see from these modifications, anything goes! For adults who are learning the alphabet, you need to be as creative as possible. The more senses you can use together, the better! Also, although no research has been done to prove it, we believe that laughing helps you learn. Have fun!

**Materials:** Letter sheets and sandpaper; Modification A: sand, rice, a bowl; Modification B: string, cardboard or paper, glue, scissors; Modification D: chalk board, Modifications C, E, F: you and your learning partner!



# Letter Discrimination

**Purpose:** To practice discriminating between similar letters and words.

**Directions:** Make a large print sheet of letters, alternating them randomly.

b d d d b b d b d b d d d b b  
d d d b b d b d b d d b b d b  
b d b b d d b b d d b b d d d  
b b d b d d b d b d d d b b b

Have your learning partner look at one of each letter, side by side. Discuss the things about the letters that are similar and different.

Give your partner the letter sheet and ask him or her to circle all of one of the letters.

(b) d (b) (b) d (b) d

After your partner becomes better at this, make another discrimination sheet with smaller letters. Keep reducing the size until it is the size of average text.

## Modifications

- A. Play concentration with letters or words that your partner often confuses.
- B. Develop visual memory clues such as M looks like mountains and W looks like a wave.
- C. For the letters b and d, write the letter b in your partner's right hand (because the letter b faces right) and the letter d in your partner's left hand.
- D. Put your hands on your cheeks and say the letters. Feel the difference between the letters as you say them.
- E. Say words that begin with the letter sounds and ask your partner to tell you which letter begins each word.

**Materials:** A discrimination sheet, pencil and paper; Modification A: 3x5 cards, pen or markers.



# Letter Discrimination

b d b b d b d d b d b d b b d b  
d b d d b b d b d d d b b d b b  
b b b d b d b d d b d d b b d d  
d b b d b b d d b d b d b b d b  
b d b d b b d b d b b b d d d d

p q p p q p q q q p q p q p q q  
q p q q q p q p p p q p q q p q  
p q q p q q q p p q q q p q p p  
p p p q q p q p p q q q q p q p  
q p q q p p q q p q q p q p p q

m n n m n m n m n m n n m n m m  
n n n m n m m n n m n m m m n m  
m m n n m n m m n n n m n m n n  
n n m n n n m m n m n m n m n m  
m n m n m m n m n m n n m n m n

# Letter Discrimination

m w m m w m w w m w m w m  
w w w m m w m w w m m m m  
m m m w m w w m w m w m m  
w w m w m m w w m w m w m  
m m m w m w m m w w w m m

u v u v u v u u u v u v u u v  
v v v u v v u v u u u v u v u u  
u u v u v v u v u u u v v v u v  
v v u u v u v v v u v v u u u u  
v u v u v v u u v v v u u v v u

on no no on no no on on no no  
no no on on on no on no on no  
on on on no no on on no on no  
no no on no on on on no no on  
on on no no no on no no on no



# G and C Rules

**Purpose:** To help you and your learning partner understand how to tell the difference between soft and hard g and c sounds.

**Directions:** Help your partner think of words that begin with or contain g's and c's. Put them into categories according to the kind of sound they make.

gate  
go  
get  
good

giant  
large  
edge  
hedge

cute  
cup  
cake  
candy

cent  
city  
race  
ice

Try to figure out how the words in each category are the same. Make up rules to use when reading g's and c's.

Review the rules on the next page. See if the rules you made with your learning partner are the same.

## Modifications

A. Make G and C flash cards. Color hard sounds red and soft sounds blue.

B. Play a matching game; match words that have the same letter sound.

C. Say a G or C word aloud. Ask your partner to say the letter sound in the word.

**Materials:** G and C word list; Modification A and B: flash cards and markers.

## G and C Rules

1. When a C is followed by e, i, or y, the C usually has an S sound(soft C).

ace      cent      race      city

2. When a C is followed by any other vowel or is at the end of a word, it generally has the k sound (hard C).

cart      attic      cot      act

3. When a G is followed by an e, i or y, the G usually has the J sound(soft G).

giant      edge      gym      large

4. When a G is followed by any other vowel or is at the end of a word, it usually has the G sound (hard G).

good      bag      gate      ago

You and your partner can try to find the exceptions!



# What Does It Start With?

**Purpose:** To help develop the listening skills necessary to sound out words, to help learners identify the beginning sounds of words.

**Directions:** Choose a list of words that begin with the sound of their first letter (ie. do not choose knee - it starts with the letter sound n but the letter symbol k).

Say the word aloud to your learning partner. Try to have your partner look away from your mouth.

Have your partner say the word out loud.

Ask your partner to tell you what letter sound begins the word.

At first, you want to avoid words that begin with blends such as flower, tree, and black, and stick to words with one consonant or vowel sound in the first syllable.

## Modifications

- A. You can ask your partner to think of some words that start with a certain letter sound.
- B. Use a magazine to find pictures of words that start with specific letter sounds.
- C. Identify things in the room that begin with a certain letter sound.
- D. As your partner becomes better at identifying the beginning sounds, try the ending sounds or consonant blends.

**Materials:** Word list and your learning partner; Modification B: magazine, scissors, glue and paper.



# Left and Right

**Purpose:** To develop understanding of left-right orientation. Some adults have difficulty reading because they are not sure where to begin and where to stop.

**Directions:** Talk with your learning partner about the colors green and red and what they signify (go and stop). If your partner has difficulty with this, this exercise may not be appropriate.

Write words with the first letter in green and the last letter in red. After your partner feels comfortable with this, try using the green and red only at the beginning and end of sentences.

boy      fun      everything      smile

I went to town yesterday. I bought some new clothes.

## Modifications

- A. For color blind learners, choose a texture or shape to signify the beginning and end of the word or sentence. You might want to use a triangle for start and an octagon (stop sign shape) for stop.
- B. You can color the punctuation marks at the end of sentences red (for stop) and those in the middle of sentences yellow (for yield or caution). This will help learners who are beginning to learn punctuation know when to pause and go on, and when to stop.

**Materials:** Paper and colored markers.



# Cartoon Strips

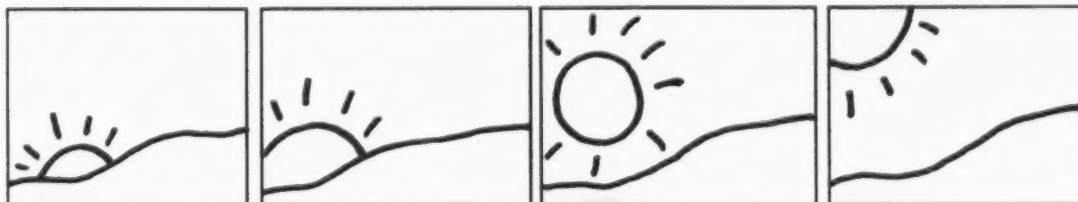
**Purpose:** To help learners understand order and sequence.

**Directions:** Choose a simple comic strip with three or four frames. Comic strips without words are best for this activity. Cut the frames apart. Have the learner look at each frame and place them in order.

Discuss the chosen order and make sure it makes sense.

## Modifications

A. You can draw pictures of an event, such as the sun rising, a flower growing, two people playing catch, and have the learner place the pictures in order.



B. You can also cut up words in a sentence, sentences in a paragraph, or parts of a set of instructions and have your partner place them in order.

C. Type the lyrics of a slow song and cut them up. Help the learner arrange them in order as you listen to the song.

**Materials:** Comic strips, scissors, paper, and tape; Modification A: crayons, markers and cubed paper or 3x5 cards; Modification B: text, paper, scissor and tape; Modification C: tape player, audio tape, lyrics, scissors, tape.





# Describe the Picture

**Purpose:** To develop critical thinking skills such as observation, information gathering, and prediction.

**Directions:** Find an interesting photograph that tells a story or shows an action. Newspaper photos are good because they are from adult reading material.

Have the learner tell you about the picture. You may have to ask questions at first, but avoid closed questions (that can be answered with a yes or no) and try to ask questions like, "What do you think the boy is doing?"

Discuss what might happen as a result of the event in the picture, or what you would do in that situation.

## Modifications

- A. Tape the learner's description of the picture. At another lesson, play the tape (or read a written version of the description) and have the learner choose, from several pictures, which one he or she was describing.
- B. Work with a series of pictures, one at a time. Have the learner predict what will happen next. Use the next photo in the series to determine if the prediction was correct. If it was, make another prediction. If it was not correct, discuss why, what did happen, and what might happen now.
- C. Identify the items in the picture that begin with specific letters.
- D. Make a list of words that might occur in the article or story that goes with the picture.

**Materials:** Photographs, newspapers, hand drawn pictures; Modifications A-D: a tape player and a series of photographs. The book, A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words, (Editions Soleil Publishing, Inc.) is an excellent source of interesting pictures for this activity.



# Read Aloud

**Purpose:** To develop comprehension and thinking skills. Many of us do not realize that when we read, we are talking to ourselves inside our heads. This makes reading an act of listening comprehension. Strong listening comprehension skills are a vital tool for good reading comprehension.

**Directions:** Choose a short paragraph or story that you feel will interest your learning partner. It is not fair to expect an adult who is a beginning reader to understand War and Peace when read aloud. Try a story one or two levels more difficult than your normal reading material. Remember you can always get harder material for next time, but you don't want to frustrate your partner by choosing something too difficult.

*Read the story aloud to your partner.* (This is not assisted reading. This is a time to allow the learner to concentrate on listening, not following along or trying to read.)

*Ask you partner questions as you go along to test for comprehension.* This is a must! If you do not do this, it will be likely that your learning partner smiled and laughed only when you did, not understanding a thing.

*When you are finished, talk about the story.* Did your partner enjoy it? Did you? Why or why not? Remember these comments for the next time you choose a text to read aloud.

## Modifications

- A. You can read one chapter or section of a story at the beginning of each lesson.
- B. Stop before the end of a story and have your partner make up an ending. Tape the ending or write it down. Then read the "real" ending. Compare them. Which did you like better?
- C. Tape the story so that your learning partner can take the tape home and listen to it again. At home, he or she may want to follow along with the text.
- D. Try this with the language experience approach. Save old ones and read!

**Materials:** All you need is a story and your partner! For the modifications, you need a tape recorder and some paper and a pen.



# Webbing

**Purpose:** To practice and develop pre-reading skills, to call up related information as a way of promoting and enhancing listening and reading comprehension.

**Directions:** Choose a story to read. Use a picture or title to begin conversation about the story with your learning partner. The object of this activity is to brainstorm and find out all your partner knows about the topic. As you talk, draw a map or "Web" of the comments and observations your partner makes, putting the main idea in the center and working out.



## Modifications

- A. Use different colors for different subject areas of the web.
- B. After reading the story, find all of the web words that were in the story.
- C. After reading the story, look at the web and decide if the story was about what you thought it would be. Why or why not?
- D. This is an excellent pre-writing exercise. You can write the webs at first and then help your learning partner develop his or her own. He or she can use the words on the web to help them write a story.
- E. You can make a web after you listen to a story, summarizing the main events.



# Reading



# Color Writing

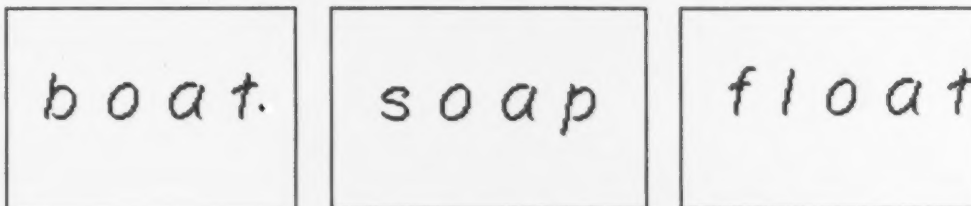
**Purpose:** To help learners understand letter patterns, sentence patterns, basic grammar, and punctuation.

**Directions:** There are many ways to incorporate the idea of Color Writing into your lessons. All you need is a few markers and some paper. Have fun!

## Modifications

A. *Sequence:* Write the first letter or word in green for go and the last letter or word in red for stop. This helps learners know to read from right to left.

B. *Letter Patterns:* Choose a letter pattern, such as **oa**, to work on. Make flash cards of **oa** words and put the **oa** in red and all other letters in black.



C. *Grammar:* To work on parts of speech, write all nouns red, adjectives blue, verbs green, etc. After you have practiced reading color-coded text for a while, read a plain (all black) text with your partner. Ask your partner to tell you what color certain words should be. They will have learned the parts of speech without ever worrying about confusing terms like preposition, active verb, etc. This helps learners get over the feeling of being overwhelmed by new information.

D. *Punctuation:* Make commas pink, exclamation points yellow, periods red, quotation marks green, and colons orange.

**Materials:** Paper, magic markers, creativity!



# Concentration

**Purpose:** To help with word recognition, to review sight word vocabulary and to emphasize looking at the whole word, to develop memory skills.

**Directions:** Choose 5 or 6 vocabulary words. Make two 3x5 flash cards for each word. Be sure that you cannot see through the flash card when it is face down on a table.

Mix up the flash cards and place them, face down, on a table.

The object of concentration is to find the pairs of words. You turn two cards over during each turn. If it is a pair, you get to keep the cards. If it is not a pair, you must turn them back over and give the other player a turn.

Watch each other's moves and try to remember where the pairs of words are.

Remember to reinforce the vocabulary words by having your learning partner say the words out loud as he or she turns them over.

## Modifications

- A. You can match an addition problem and its solution.
- B. You can match a picture and the word it represents.
- C. You can match synonyms, antonyms, words with the same beginning sound, or words that rhyme.
- D. You can match numbers (1) and their words (one).
- E. You can match clock faces and the digital time.
- F. You can match money amounts and pictures of bills and coins.

**Materials:** 3x5 cards, markers, vocabulary words; Modification B: word pictures, scissors, glue; Modification F: pictures of coins and bills in specific dollar amounts.



# Word Shapes

**Purpose:** To help learners who need more than a sight word approach to reading. This technique emphasizes the shape of each word and can incorporate several senses.

**Directions:** Write a word on a piece of paper in large letters. Use a thick marker to draw a line around the word, emphasizing the shape.

boy

girl

you

Have your learning partner trace the shape while saying the word. Encourage your partner to draw the lines around new vocabulary words.

## Modifications

- A. Play a matching game with the words and the shapes.
- B. Glue yarn or sand around the word so the learner can feel the shape.
- C. Trace the shape and the word on sandpaper.
- D. Cut colored paper in the shape of the words. See if your learning partner can recognize the word with the shape only (no letters, or just the first letter).
- E. Place a block around each letter. Once your partner knows the word, leave all blocks blank except the first one.

dog

d

**Materials:** Paper and a thick marker; Modification B: glue and yarn or sand; Modification C: sandpaper; Modification D: colored paper and scissors.

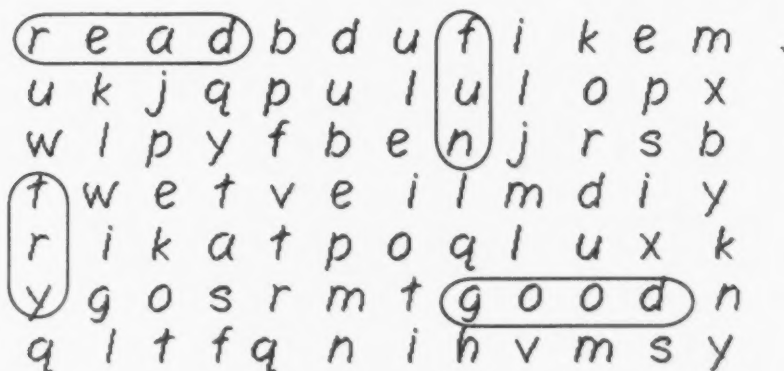




# Word Search

**Purpose:** To reinforce sight word vocabulary in a new way. This is an excellent review activity.

**Directions:** Choose five to ten sight words that your learning partner knows relatively well. Make a word search in large print using lower case letters. Hide the vocabulary words in the search.



## Modifications

- A. To make this exercise a bit easier, include a list of the words your partner will be trying to find. Have your partner circle the words as they are found.
- B. Have all of the words make one sentence. When your partner has found all of the words, ask him or her to make a sentence out of the words.
- C. Read the words aloud and ask your partner to find them. They will have to know what letter the word begins with, and they will need to recognize the spelling of the word.
- D. You can write words one right after each other in a spiral and have your partner mark where one word ends and another begins.
- E. Make the puzzle in a shape and pick vocabulary words that go along with the shape. For example, you can make the puzzle in the shape of a boat and use words such as sea, sail, boat, sun, beach, etc.

**Materials:** Paper, pens, and your imagination!



# Word Families

**Purpose:** To help learners become familiar with common letter patterns; to help learners understand the sound patterns in English. Knowing letter and sound patterns will help new readers sound out unfamiliar words.

**Directions:** Choose a letter sound or letter pattern to work on such as the short a or the letter pair ow. Make a list of everyday words that include this letter or pattern. It is important that you choose words that your learning partner needs to know. Using obscure words just because they contain the pattern will only confuse your partner. In addition, do not worry about using terms such as long or short vowels, consonant blends, etc. Allow your partner to describe the characteristics of the pattern or sound you are learning together.

bat  
mat  
hat

bow  
yellow  
mow

*Review each list with your partner. Ask your partner to find the common letters or sound in each list. Talk about any rules that may apply. You may want to discuss some of the exceptions, but only if it will not confuse things.*

The important thing to remember with this exercise is this: *Do not cover too much information at once. Begin with two or three words in the family. Then work up to more.*

Once your learning partner is comfortable with the letter pattern or sound, ask him or her to think of other words that belong to that family.

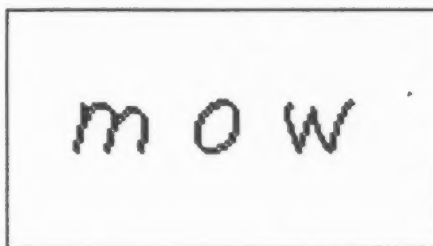
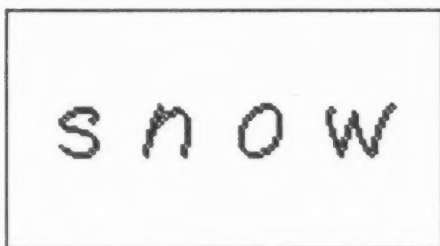
Finally, *choose one word for a memory word.* This word should be the most common, or most basic word in the family. Use this word as a crutch to help your partner remember the sound or pattern.

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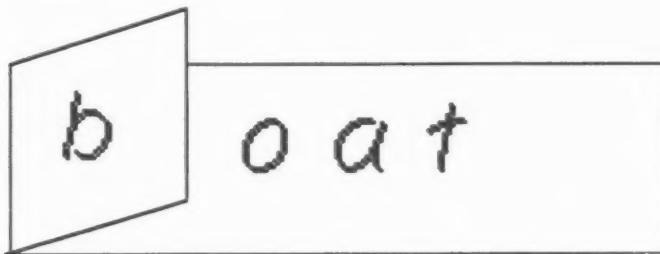
# Word Families

## Modifications

A. You can use color to enhance the letter patterns on your flash cards. Write the new pattern in red and the rest of the word in black.



B. You can make flip cards to reveal the words in a family.



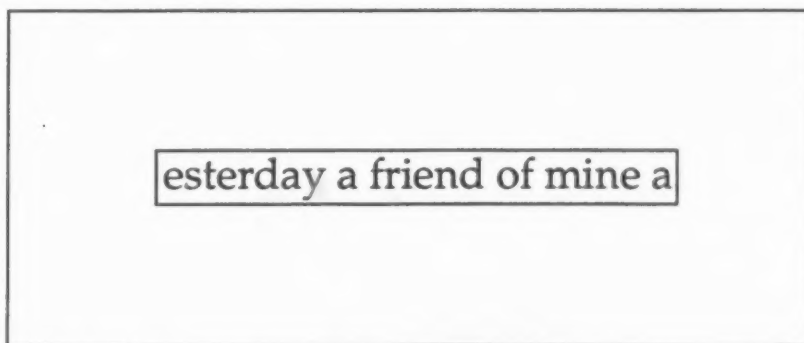
The ending or beginning of the word remains the same, and your learning partner can practice putting different sounds on the words.



# Reading Window

**Purpose:** Many learners have difficulty focusing on the next word because they are concerned about difficult words that may be coming up in the passage. The Reading Window helps new readers learn to take only a few words at a time. This is an excellent tool for learners who have high reading anxiety.

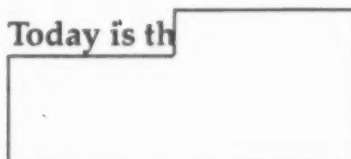
**Directions:** Cut a rectangular window out of the center of a 3x5 or 5x7 unlined flashcard. Have your learning partner hold the card over the text, and move the window as he or she reads.



You can make the window smaller at first, and work to enlarge it. It is important to allow your partner to have enough words to use context when reading. The window will keep your partner from looking through the entire text and worrying about the "big word" to come.

## Modifications

A. If the window idea does not work for your partner, you can try cutting the corner off of a flash card and using it in a similar fashion.



**Materials:** 3x5 or 5x7 flash cards, scissors, and text.



# Before, During, and After

**Purpose:** To help learners prepare for a reading passage by discussing ideas and vocabulary related to the topic. This exercise helps develop prediction skills and also encourages an ongoing check of comprehension. This exercise will become second nature and should be done, to some extent, for all lesson reading. This is a versatile activity because you can use it with reading aloud, assisted reading, silent reading, and webbing for simple and more challenging passages.

**Directions:** **BEFORE:** Use a picture, caption, or the title of your text to begin pre-reading discussion. *Ask* your learning partner to tell you what he or she already knows about the topic. *Discuss* what the picture or title tells you about the text and why. *Predict* what the story may be about, and what might happen.

If this is an unfamiliar topic to either of you, *talk about what you would like to learn* from the reading passage. Make a list of what your partner wants to learn.

**DURING:** Read the beginning of the passage. Stop at an appropriate point and *ask your partner some questions*: "Was the passage about what we thought it would be?" "Why or why not?" "What new things did we learn about the topic?" "What do you think will happen next?"

*Try to avoid asking yes or no questions.* This will not tell you if your partner really understands what you have read together. *Also try to avoid questions that come directly from the text.* Your partner may be able to repeat the exact words from the passage, but he or she still may not be comprehending the story. Depending on the length of your text, you will want to stop several or many times throughout the reading.

**AFTER:** Once you are finished with the passage, talk again about the things you learned, the new words you encountered, and how the passage made each of you feel. Encourage your partner to talk about the story in his or her own words. This is a terrific pre-writing activity. Learners must be able to express themselves in words before we can expect them to express themselves in writing. Finally, talk about what you liked and did not like. *Ask your partner if he or she would like to read that story, or one like it, again?* Make a note to yourself so you remember this.

**NOTE:** This exercise is also known as KWL. K= What the learner KNOWS before, W = What the learner WANTS to learn, and L = What the learner has LEARNED.

**Materials:** A reading passage, a pen and paper.



# Taped Reading

**Purpose:** To provide a permanent reading for the learner to review on his or her own. Taping short stories or passages is a terrific way to encourage reluctant students to practice reading at home.

**Directions:** Choose a piece of text that you feel will interest your learning partner. Be sure the level is appropriate for your partner's reading and/or listening ability.

Read the passage into the tape recorder. *Remember to read clearly and slowly.* (It might feel strange but this is very important.) You might want to pause for a while between sentences or paragraphs to allow your partner some extra listening time.

Be sure to review the usage of the tape recorder with your learning partner. You might even want to practice with the beginning of the passage during a lesson to ensure that this experience goes smoothly and is not frustrating for your learning partner.

## Modifications

- A. Read the passage with your learning partner during a lesson and tape the passage for independent review.
- B. Write or tape several questions about the passage at the end. You can even have your partner record his or her answers.
- C. Tape your partner reading during a lesson.
- D. Tape one chapter of a longer story each week. Always have the text available for your learning partner to follow if he or she chooses to do so.

**Materials:** Tape recorder, 30 minute tapes, and a clearly printed copy of the taped passage.



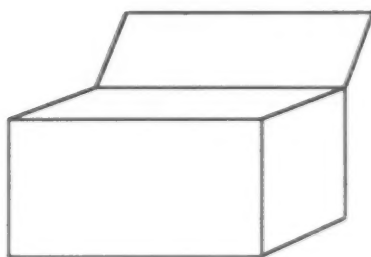


# Vocabulary Box

**Purpose:** To encourage continual review of vocabulary words. One of the largest difficulties tutors and learners encounter is the retention of information. Research has shown that we need to be exposed to new information over six times in a two to three week period for this new information to go into long term memory. Use this box to remind yourself and your partner to always review new and old vocabulary words. This activity is also an excellent tool for demonstrating progress to new readers.

**Directions:** Get a file card box the size of your flash cards, 3x5 or 5x7. Make two sections in the box: *Words I Know*, and *Words I am Learning*. As you and your partner learn new words, write them on flash cards and place them in the *Words I am Learning* section. Once your partner is confidently reading the new word, move it to the *Words I Know* section.

Spend time every week reviewing words from both sections of your vocabulary box. As some of the *I Know* words are forgotten, you should move them back to *I am Learning* for more active review. As the *I Know* section enlarges, you and your partner can celebrate your success!



## Modifications

- A. You can file words according to letter pattern or letter sound families.
- B. You can file words by parts of speech.
- C. You can make a box for letters of the alphabet with a *Letters I Know* section and a *Letters I am Learning* section.
- D. You can have a section for Sentences I Can Read.

**Materials:** File card box, flash cards, markers, and cardboard dividers.





# Scrabble

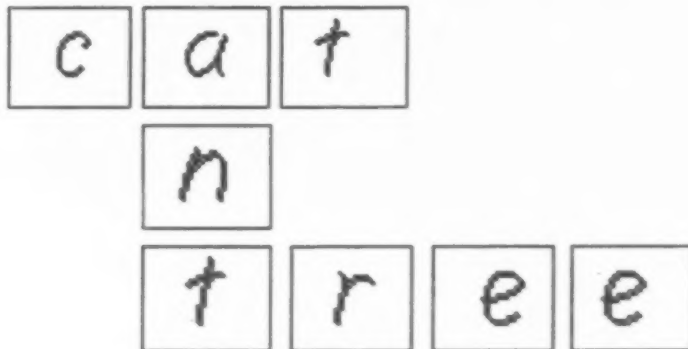
**Purpose:** To involve motion and touch in the learning of new words. This exercise helps learners understand words and their relationships to each other. This is a fun and effective way to work on vocabulary at any level.

**Directions:** Make your own Scrabble tiles using cardboard and a thick magic marker. Remember to use lower case letters on your tiles.

Give your partner a small list of words and read them aloud together.

Ask your partner to make one of the words out of the tiles. As your partner assembles the words, have him or her say the letters aloud and then say the word when it is completed.

Then ask your partner to choose another word from the list that contains one of the letters from the first word. If your partner does not understand the concept of Scrabble, you might want to demonstrate it briefly.

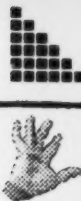


## Modifications

- A. See how many words you can make out of ten or twelve letters.
  - B. You can take turns making the words.
  - C. Once you have completed the scrabble list of words, clear your tiles and try again, starting with a different word. See how many patterns you can make with that list of words.
  - D. You can make your list of words from the same family. Be sure you have enough tiles for all of the letters.
  - E. You can color some tiles red, green, etc. for certain letter sounds or patterns.
- NOTE:** You can use these tiles all the time when you are working on spelling and new words. Using touch and movement helps to reinforce information for many learners.

**Materials:** Heavy cardboard, paper cutter or strong scissors, and a thick marker.

# Writing



# Alphabet Steps

**Purpose:** To develop the eye-hand coordination needed for writing. To practice writing the letters of the alphabet.

**Directions:** Choose steps for each letter and draw them out using dotted lines for the learner to trace.



Have the learner practice the steps with the pattern. Then have him or her write the letters independently.

## Modifications

- A. You can start with shapes (see Shape Steps in Math, Measurement, and Money).
- B. Try using a different color for each step.
- C. Use tracing paper over the letters.
- D. Place sandpaper underneath the writing paper to emphasize the feeling of writing the letters.

**Materials:** Paper, pens, and the letter steps; Modification A: shape patterns, paper and colored markers; Modification B: markers and paper; Modification C: tracing paper and pencils; Modification D: sandpaper, pencils.



# Journal Writing

**Purpose:** To provide a correction free place for writing practice. The idea of a journal is excellent for several reasons. It is adaptable to writing at any level, it is a terrific self esteem tool, and it is not bound to any particular text (as writing in workbooks almost always is). Because most adult learners have tremendous anxiety about writing, you may have to work on building this into your lesson over time. Persevere. If you do, this will be your most useful and successful technique.

**Directions:** Get a bound notebook that will wear well. Black composition books work well. Ask if your partner has a preference for lined or unlined pages. Choose a part of your lesson that will be always set aside for writing and plan journal activities for that time, every week.

Your immediate reaction to this may be "But my partner can't write!" Don't be discouraged. Look through the modifications and you will probably find several for you, and hopefully you will get some ideas of your own.

When working with a journal, there are several things you should remember:

1. NEVER correct errors in the journal unless your partner specifically begs you to. You need to help your partner get used to experimenting, guessing, and just writing.
2. Use the journal as a guide. Look for mistakes your partner makes often. Design an activity to teach them the correction OUTSIDE OF THE JOURNAL. Help your partner apply this newly learned skill in writing.
3. REVIEW the journal occasionally. SHOW SUCCESS to your partner by observing improvement in writing and the quantity of writing! Ask your partner about the activities he or she enjoyed the most, is most proud of, and would like to do more often.

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# Journal Writing

## Modifications

A: Have a page or two for every letter of the alphabet. Ask your partner to cut out pictures from magazines of things that begin with specific letters. Ask your partner to write down foods from their kitchen that begin with certain letters.

B. Practice writing name, address, and phone number in the journal. Cut out forms from cereal boxes and magazines and help your partner write this information on the forms. Tape the forms in the journal.

C. Pick a topic for each lesson. Play music while both of you write as many words or ideas you can think of that are related to that topic. When you are finished, read your writing to each other.

D. Try writing for the length of an entire song without stopping. If you are stuck, write the same word over and over until you think of something else to write. This exercise helps learners who have difficulty getting started, or writing more than one or two sentences.

E. Write instructions for each other. Your partner can teach you how to make a favorite sandwich. You can teach your partner how to plant daffodils.

F. Keep Language Experiences in your partner's journal. It doesn't matter that you are doing the writing. You are still recording your partner's work!

G. Have a page for each word family and keep a list of all of the words your partner learns in that family.

**Materials:** A writing journal and pencils; Modification A: magazines, scissors, and glue or tape; Modification B: address forms, glue or tape; Modification C and D: tape player, classical or relaxing music, pencils or pens.



# The Language Experience

**Purpose:** To help learners make the connection between talking and reading. The language experience is one of the most universally recommended methods for working with adult learners. It is an excellent way to create high interest, level-appropriate text for your lessons.

**Directions:** *Ask your partner to tell you a story.* You can ask about something specific that your partner mentions in conversation. You might ask your partner to tell you about his first day of hunting season, or her best friend's wedding, or perhaps why pistachio is his favorite ice cream.

As your partner talks, *record what he or she is saying word for word.* You can write as he or she talks, or you can use a tape recorder and transcribe the conversations later. (This is easier by far.) Try to get at least four or five good sentences.

*Do not correct grammar when you transcribe the Language Experience.* You should put in punctuation and proper capitalization.

Once you have a story, set it aside and use it in a few weeks for a text.

This exercise is ideal because there is a great lack of interesting, adult, beginning material. You can use any reading method with the Language Experience that you would use with a regular text. Since you wait a few weeks to use your Language Experience, your learning partner will not remember it exactly, but the topic will be familiar since it was a personal event or recollection.

## Modifications

Here are some exercises you might consider using.

Assisted Reading  
Reading Aloud

CLOZE  
Vocabulary Cards

A. You can collect all of the Language Experiences you make with your partner in a journal or notebook and review them from time to time. This is a terrific way to demonstrate progress.

B. You can make several Language Experiences along one theme and make a book out of the stories.

**Materials:** A tape recorder, pen, paper, and your learning partner.





# Learner Book

**Purpose:** To develop a learner created text for use in lessons. Creating an actual book solidifies and emphasizes the work you and your learning partner are doing together. When you and your partner finish your book, you will both feel a tremendous sense of accomplishment and your partner will have a tangible example of his or her success.

**Directions:** The complexity of the book contents will depend entirely on the level of your learning partner and how you want to make the book. You can use two different approaches.

First, you can use the Language Experience method and have your learning partner relate a story to you while you do the writing. This is good for learners who have difficulty expressing themselves. Your partner needs to develop verbal expression skills before he or she can move into written expression.

Second, you can have your partner do all of the writing. You can talk about a topic, do a mapping exercise, and then help your partner create his or her own text.

*You should feel free to combine both of these approaches to fit your partner's needs.*

The book will incorporate a process as you start with ideas, brainstorm a little, write some things down, correct them, change your minds, correct them again, and then produce a final version.

*This is a fabulous way to help learners understand that writing is a process and that no one creates perfect text the first time around (This is called "Process Writing" and is an important part of learning to write.) As you go through this process, you will be learning about punctuation, capitalization, dictionary skills, and much more.*

Do not try to do this in one lesson. Instead, make this a project over several weeks or months and learn as much as you can along the way. Once you have completed your text, all you need to do is make your book!

**This exercise was contributed by Cathy Cassab, volunteer tutor.**

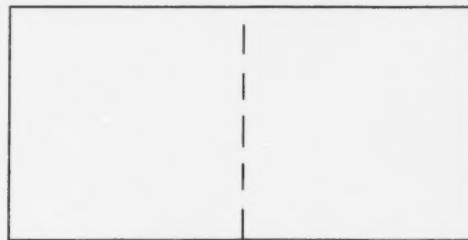
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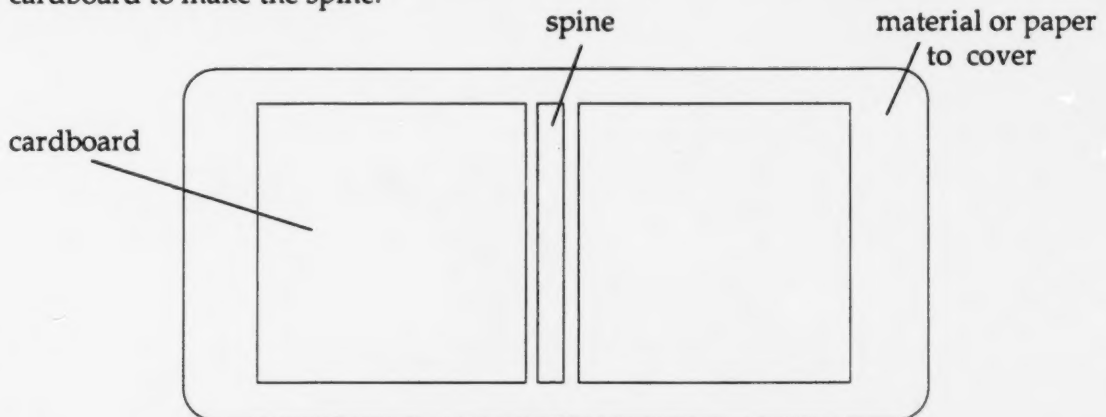
# Learner Book

## How to Make a Learner Book

1. Decide how large you would like your pages to be. You need to get paper that is twice this size. (for 5x7 pages, you need paper that is 10x14)
2. Decide how many pages you need. This will depend on how much text you have and how large your print will be. Add four pages to the total you need.
3. Determine how many sheets of paper you need by dividing the number of pages by 2. (For a 10 page story + your four extra, you will need seven sheets of paper.)
4. Cut your paper if you have to. Fold it in half and sew it with a needle and dental floss down the middle.



5. To make the cover, you need two identical pieces of cardboard, a bit larger than the size of your folded pages. Then you need a large piece of paper or material to cover both sheets of cardboard. Finally, you need a skinny piece of cardboard to make the spine.

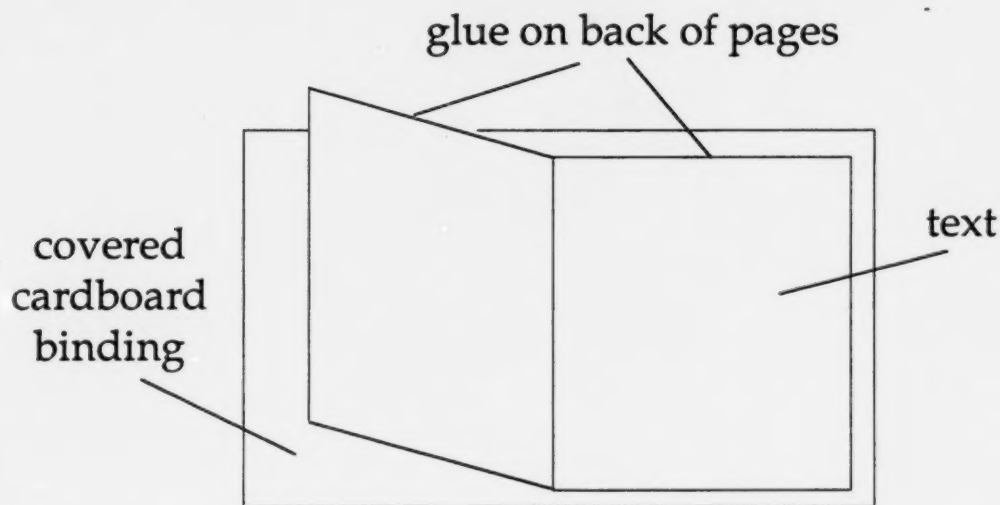


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# Learner Book

## How to Make a Learner Book

6. Fold over the edges of your material or paper and glue them to the cardboard.
7. Then take your text pages and use the outside pages to attach the text to the binding. Using a glue stick, cover the outside of your text packet with glue. Then place these pages onto your cardboard binding, centering the middle of the pages in the middle of the skinny strip of cardboard that will make the spine.



8. Allow time for your glue to dry before writing anything on the inside front or back covers or decorating your front cover.

**Your book is done!**  
**Read it together and start another one!**

**Materials:** Heavy paper for pages, cardboard, glue or glue stick, scissors and/or papercutter, dental floss, needle, material or large paper to cover binding, pens and markers to create text, magazines to find illustrations, a story and some imagination!



# Music Writing

**Purpose:** To help learners feel more comfortable with the idea of writing. Research has shown that some learners benefit from soft, peaceful music playing while they learn. We have found that playing classical or new age music while writing can help ease writing anxiety significantly.

**Directions:** Choose a tape of soft, quiet music to play for a portion of your lesson.

Get a journal for yourself and your learning partner.

Play the music for about ten or fifteen minutes and write during that time. You should both write and share your writing with each other when you are finished. Do this at the same time at every lesson for a while so that your partner will get used to it. You may also want to start with a shorter time and increase it as you go along.

## Modifications

- A. Choose music that has several different tempos and write about what you think might be happening in the music.
- B. Use nature music (forest sounds or ocean sounds) and write about the environment the music depicts.
- C. Play music throughout your entire lesson. If the music does not have words, it will fade into the background and create a relaxed learning environment.
- D. Practice writing letters in rhythm to the music, writing a new letter every four beats.
- E. Listen to music and draw a picture that the music inspires. Then write a story about the picture together.

**Materials:** Tape player, music cassettes, paper and pens or markers.



# Set Stories to Music

**Purpose:** To reinforce new words and writing skills through the use of music and rhythm. The tutor who developed this exercise found that it helps learners read more fluently, remember sight words, and increase motivation. For adults who enjoy music and singing, this is the perfect activity! This is also terrific for learners who are just beginning to write, because new writers often write in a more poem-like fashion with shorter sentences. This type of writing is easily set to music.

**Directions:** Choose an original text that your learning partner has created.

Create a simple melody that goes with the text.

Practice reading the text with your partner and then try putting it to the music.



For tutors who do not consider themselves musically inclined, do not be afraid. With access to a piano (most churches have them) and a little practice, you too can create simple melodies for your learning partner's stories.

## Modifications

- A. You can write out the lyrics to a song your partner knows and sing along to a tape or with the piano.
- B. Tape your original songs so that your partner can practice at home.
- C. Write your songs out on sheet music paper and keep them in a notebook. Create your own song book! (See Learner Books)
- D. You can make melodies for words and their spellings, word families, or grammar rules. (Sing the i before e song!)

**Materials:** Piano, stories and some imagination; Modification A and B: tape player, blank tape, piano, lyrics; Modification C: Sheet music.

This activity was contributed by Christine Mash, volunteer tutor.

# **Speaking and Listening**



# Television

**Purpose:** To help develop observation, listening, and speaking skills. The television can be an excellent tool for your lessons. The information on television is very visual and auditory, colorful, interesting, and adult oriented. In addition, this exercise can be used to increase confidence in shy speakers and can be used as an exercise for learners who are not readers.

**Directions:** Videotape a brief portion (one to five minutes) of a television program. Television that is instructional, such as a cooking show or a home improvement show, or high action, such as a car chase or a James Bond movie, works best for this type of exercise.

*Watch the segment several times before the lesson so you are familiar with it.*

*Play the tape for your learning partner and describe the actions, pausing where necessary. It is best if you write down what you are going to say before your lesson so that you are sure to use relatively familiar vocabulary and explanations that are not too complicated.*

*Play the tape again and describe the actions, this time have your partner repeat after you. (For non-ESL learners, you may skip this step)*

*Finally, play the tape again and let the learner describe the actions, pausing where necessary.*

## Modifications

- A. Ask your partner to write a summary of the television segment.
- B. Write a list of new vocabulary words you will use in your description. Ask your partner to define them orally once you have watched and described the segment several times.
- C. For learners with advanced speaking, but more limited listening ability, have them describe the segment after watching it once or twice (without your description).

**Materials:** Television, VCR, written description; **Modifications:** paper and pens.





# Do as I Say

**Purpose:** To help learners develop listening skills that will enable them to follow directions. This activity is also super for building confidence in shy speakers. It is also excellent for non-readers because the lesson does not depend on text.

**Directions:** *Select an everyday activity* that can be described in detail. Break it down into separate operations or steps (5-7 steps is good to begin with).

*Perform the activity, describing each step, while your learning partner observes.*

*Next, describe each step, but ask your partner to perform the activity.*

*Finally, have your partner describe and perform the activity.*

Here are some suggestions for "Do as I Say" activities:

making a sandwich  
hammering a nail  
putting a watch on  
using a MAC card  
making lemonade

## Modifications

**A:** Write the instructions and ask your partner to follow them. Have your partner write instructions for you.

**B:** If your partner is learning English as a second language, use this activity to teach each other about customs and holidays.

**C:** If your partner has small children, use this to help your partner learn how to teach his or her children something.

**D:** This exercise works well for teaching prepositions. Give commands and have your partner follow your directions, using prepositions. "Put the pen in the box", "Put the box under the table," etc.

**Materials:** Activity steps and materials to do your activity several times.



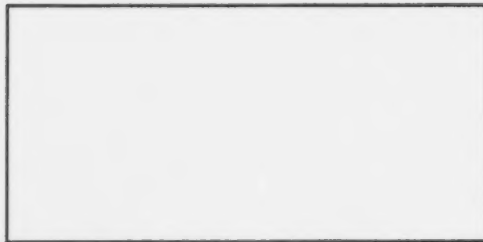


# To Be or not To Be

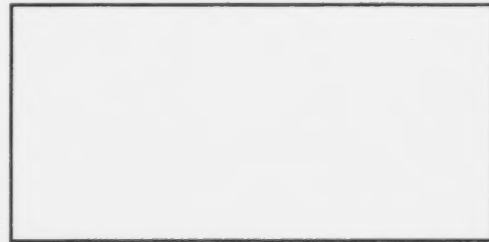
**Purpose:** To help learners understand the correct usage of the verb "to be." This exercise allows you to model the correct usage for your learning partner and practices the verb in both the singular and the plural.

**Directions:** Cut out pictures of people and animals from a colorful magazine. Be sure to cut out pictures of people alone and together so that your partner must practice the singular and plural forms of the verb.

Ask your learning partner questions using only "to be" and simple adjectives that can be answered from the magazine pictures.



Is the man smiling?



Are the children playing?

## Modifications

- A. To practice the past tense, put all of the pictures aside and ask your partner to recall: Was the man smiling? Were the children playing?
- B. Have your learning partner write the answers down as he or she says them.
- C. Use a series of pictures that depict an event (even simple sketches will do.) Describe the first picture using forms of "to be." Then have your partner describe the remaining pictures in the series.
- D. This can be a good get-to-know-you exercise. Bring in pictures of your family and tell your partner about them, using forms of "to be." Encourage your partner to do the same.
- E. Once your partner is comfortable with the use of "to be," you can use this exercise for new verbs.

**Materials:** Scissors, a magazine, paper, and pens; Modification D: family photos.



# Sing the Words

**Purpose:** To help learners practice pronunciation, new vocabulary, and idiomatic speech. This is a fun and easy way to help new speakers of English become used to the sounds of the language.

**Directions:** Choose a song that has lyrics which are easy to understand.

Write out or type the lyrics clearly.

Discuss any new vocabulary words or idiomatic phrases with your learning partner.

Read the lyrics out loud for your partner and have them read with you or repeat after you.

After you have read the lyrics alone several times, try singing along with the tape.

Your partner can take the tape home and practice independently!

## Modifications

A: You can incorporate this activity into a lesson on rhyming and letter sounds. Once your partner has learned the song, you can ask him or her to clap or raise a hand when he or she sings a word that begins with a certain letter, has a specific letter sound, or rhymes with a specific word.

B: If your partner is learning English as a second language, ask your partner to teach you a song in his or her native language. Encouraging your partner to teach you increases confidence and trust.

C: Ask your partner to write his or her own song (See Set Stories to Music).

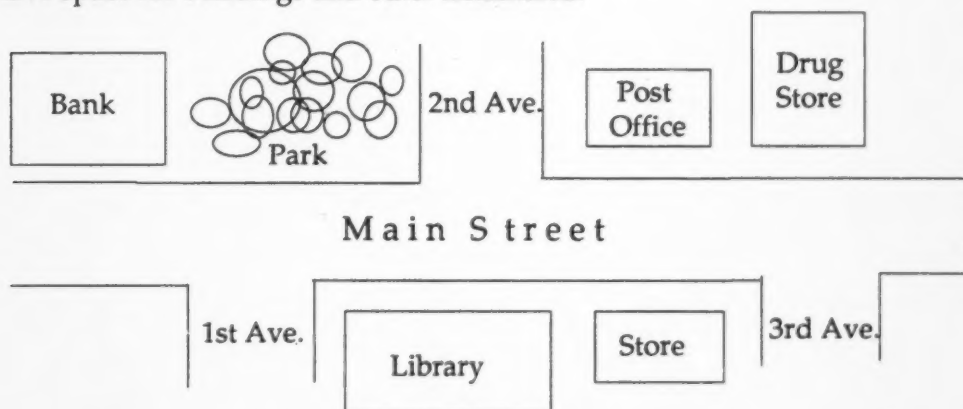
**Materials:** tape player, typed or clearly written lyrics, yourself and your partner.



# Follow My Directions

**Purpose:** To help learners develop the listening and speaking skills they need to follow and give directions. This exercise is an excellent way to help adults learn about their surroundings.

**Directions:** Draw a map of an area in your community. Make it large so you have space for buildings and other landmarks.



Give your partner a pencil and give directions to follow. As you give a direction, ask your partner to draw the path with the pencil. You should make several copies of your map so you can repeat this exercise.

Once you have given the directions, ask your partner to tell you which building he or she would be in front of. Using that location as a starting point, give another set of directions for your partner to follow.

## Modifications

A: Ask your partner to give you the directions, while you follow with a pencil.

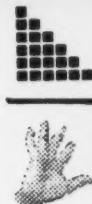
B: Use graph paper and give directions by saying, "Up one square, right seven," etc. This will practice following directions without the visual cues on the map.

C: Take a walk - Give your partner some directions (orally or in writing) and go outside. Let your partner lead, and see if you arrive at the right place!

D: Use this activity to practice prepositions. Ask your partner, what is in between the library and 3rd Avenue? What is next to the park?

**Materials:** Graph paper, pens, and an accurate map of your community.

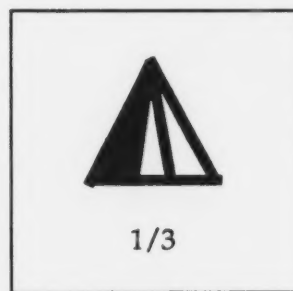
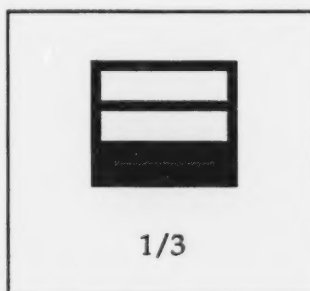
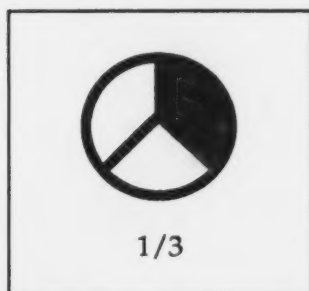
# **Math, Measurement, and Money**



# Fraction Cards

**Purpose:** To help learners understand fractions using a variety of shapes and colors. It is important to help learners *see* the math they are trying to do.

**Directions:** There are two types of Fractions Cards. The first are a set of flash cards that depict fractions in a variety of shapes, colors and sizes. It is important to explain one third as not only one third of a square, but also one third of a circle or a triangle, etc.



The other type of Fraction Card is actually a whole object cut into fractions. It is best to use heavy paper or cardboard for these cards.



Using these cards, you can help your learning partner make a variety of fractions. You can work with addition and subtraction as well.

## Modifications

**A:** Cut three dimensional objects into fractions.

**B:** Make your fraction cards with pictures of real things cut into fractions. For example, the circle could be a pie and the square a house. This will help your partner see fractions as a part of life, not just something in a math book.

**Materials:** Flash cards, markers, scissors,, contact paper (to laminate);  
Modification A: a sphere, cube, cone, etc. Modification B: magazines and glue.

This activity was contributed by Tom Dilts, volunteer tutor.

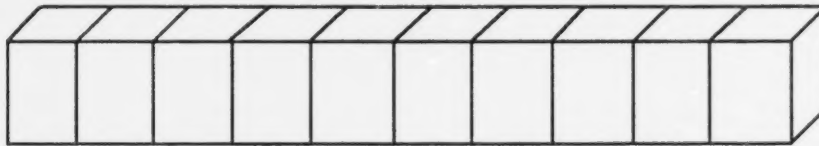


# Block Math

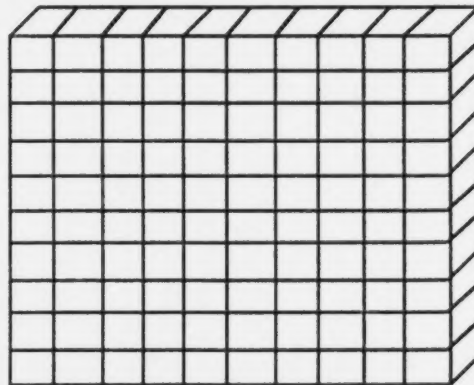
**Purpose:** To reinforce the learning of math with touch and manipulation.

**Directions:** Make or purchase the following items:

1. a rectangular piece of wood or styrofoam with lines drawn to represent ten squares.



2. a square piece with lines drawn to represent one hundred squares.



3. Cut both shapes into moveable squares so that you can manipulate them. The rectangle should be cut into ten squares. The larger square should be cut into ten rectangular strips, with each strip representing ten squares.

When working on math, use these cubes to help your partner understand ones and tens.

## Modifications

- A. Paint the tens red, the twenties blue, etc.
- B. Write the numbers 1-10 on the back of each of the 10 blocks, then you can assemble larger numbers.
- C. Play poker with your blocks and add and subtract how many "chips" you have after each turn.

**Materials:** Wood or thick cardboard, markers, and a saw or scissors.

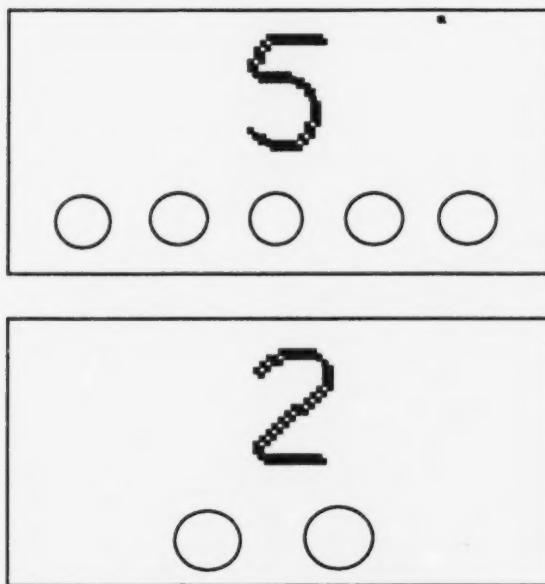




# Dot Numbers

**Purpose:** To help learners understand the amounts associated with number symbols. Many beginning math books use pictures of apples and teddy bears. This approach is more adult oriented and tactile as well.

**Directions:** Make a flash card for each number. Under the number symbol, glue the appropriate number of dots. It is best to use sandpaper, felt, or something textured so your partner can see and feel the dots.



## Modifications

- A. Make flash cards with just the dots and see if your learning partner can tell you the correct number. If your partner can do this, ask them to write the appropriate number symbol.
- B. Use the cards when learning addition or subtraction.
- C. Play a matching game or concentration with the number symbols and the dots.
- D. Use difference colored dots for each number.

**Materials:** Sandpaper, flashcards, scissors, glue, and markers.





# Column Math

**Purpose:** To help learners understand the place system in math. Columns help learners avoid mistakes when working with the addition, subtraction, multiplication or division of two or more digit number.

**Directions:** Make a sheet of paper with columns and rows. Be sure to make the places large enough for your partner to write numbers in. You can use large graph paper as well.



When working on math problems, use the column paper. The columns and rows will help to guide your partner.

Many learners of math write problems like this:

$$\begin{array}{r} 17 \\ + 26 \\ \hline \end{array}$$

As you can see, it is easy to add the 7 to nothing, add the 1 and the 6 (since they appear to be in the same column) and then carry the two down to get 277! The column guides will help ensure that this doesn't happen.

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
|  |   | 1 | 7 |
|  | + | 2 | 6 |
|  |   | 4 | 3 |

**Materials:** Paper or graph paper, markers and pencils.



# Calculator Math

**Purpose:** To help learners complete life tasks in math with accuracy while they simultaneously work on math long hand. Learning how to use a calculator helps adults feel more confident about math and learning.

**Directions:** The important thing to remember when using a calculator in your lessons is this: your learning partner does not have to be able to do lengthy addition problems. However, your partner needs to understand the math function(s) to use the calculator properly. If he or she does not understand the math concepts, the calculator will be confusing. Many new math learners believe that if they use a calculator, their answer must be right. Spend time talking about how to check your work and carefully hitting the correct buttons.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

1. Choose a math activity. Start with one function at a time. Do not go ahead of your learner's long hand concept ability. (If your learner can do some addition, but not long problems, you may work on addition. If your learner cannot yet do multiplication, do not work on multiplication.)
2. Review the buttons you will need for this activity.
3. Read or discuss what the situation is (using coupons, adding a phone bill, figuring the cost of a sale item).
4. Talk about what you would do long hand.
5. Talk about how to do the problem with a calculator.
6. Have your partner complete the problem with a calculator. Have your partner do it twice.
7. Discuss why your partner did or did not get the same answer twice (fingers hitting the wrong buttons, hitting + instead of -, etc.). Discuss how to avoid mistakes.
8. Try another problem!

## Modifications

A. To practice listening comprehension and calculator skills, read problems aloud to your partner. Remember to go slowly at first.

B. Ask your partner to bring in something from home that he or she needs math to complete. Go through the activity together twice, then have your partner try it alone. This will help your partner see the real applications of the new skills you work on in lessons!

**Materials:** Calculator and math problems.



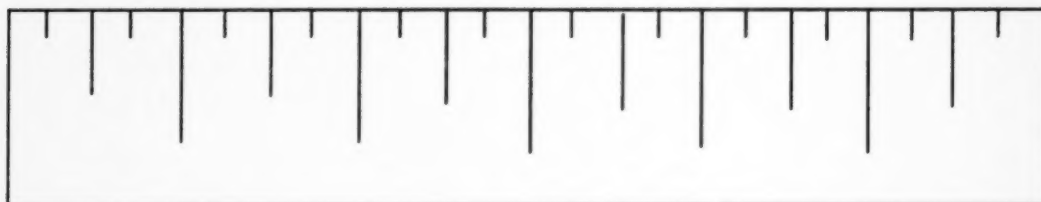
# Measure It!

**Purpose:** To help learners understand basic measurement and how to use measurement skills in real life.

**Directions:** Gather several different types of measuring tools, such as a 12 inch ruler, a yard stick, a flexible measuring tape, measuring cups, and a right angle.

Talk about measurements and distance. Bring in some items to measure. Spend some time looking at the different types of measuring tools. Discuss which tools are useful for which tasks.

Ask your partner to measure the rooms in his or her home, or the windows in the kitchen. Encourage your partner to find several uses for measuring in the home.



## Modifications

- A. Measure books, the table, the room, the windows, anything!
- B. Subtract the length of the book from the length of the table.
- C. Find out how much carpet you would need to cover the floor, or how much material you need to cover the windows.
- D. If your learning partner is good with measuring, ask him or her to show you how to build a chair, design a bookshelf, or cook a certain recipe. It is always rewarding for adult learners to have the opportunity to teach!

**Materials:** Rulers, tape measures, measuring cups, and items to measure.



# Cashier

**Purpose:** To work with counting money, making and counting change, and making purchases.

**Directions:** Get a cash box and some play money from an old board game and cut circles out of heavy cardboard to make coins.

Work with your partner to be sure he or she can identify the different denominations of bills and coins.

Develop shopping scenarios to go through in your lessons.

Have your partner purchase things from you. Your partner can decide how much the item costs, if he or she has enough money to buy it, and how much change to expect.

## Modifications

- A. Bring in household items to "sell". You can make price tags with post-it notes.
- B. Use the coupon page from your daily newspaper. Determine how much the items would have cost without the coupons, and how much they will cost with the coupons. How much will you save?
- C. Bring a catalog in and choose several items to buy. Complete the order form and determine the total cost. You can practice check writing with this activity.
- D. Ask your partner to determine all of the items he or she would need for a special project. Then use store flyers to determine the total cost of the items. How much would you have to save a month to be able to purchase the products in one year?
- E. Once your partner is becoming adept at making change and counting money, give him or her the opportunity to be the cashier.
- F. This is an excellent way to practice conversation with ESL learners. You can learn American money and shopping vocabulary at the same time. Once you have practiced in class, go shopping and try your new skills in the real world!

**Materials:** Cash box, play money, and items to purchase; Modification A: post-it notes; Modification B: newspaper, scissors; Modification C: catalog and order forms, fake checks.



# Place Charts

**Purpose:** To help learners develop an understanding of numerical places. This exercise is good for learners who have a visual disability which causes letter or symbol motion.

**Directions:** Make large place charts and label the places accordingly.

| thousands | hundreds | tens | ones |
|-----------|----------|------|------|
|           |          |      |      |

Use the place charts to help your partner learn about numbers and decimals.

## Modifications

- A. You can use your place chart pages for column math exercises (see Column Math) in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
- B. To develop listening comprehension and work on numbers, read a variety of numbers aloud and have your partner write them correctly on the place charts.
- C. Place charts are an excellent way to work on decimals. Color the decimal side of the chart yellow and make one smaller column with permanent decimal points. It is important for learners to understand that whole numbers can still be written as decimals (2.0, 15.0, etc.).

| hundreds | tens | ones | . | tenths |
|----------|------|------|---|--------|
|          |      |      |   |        |

**Materials:** place charts and pencils.

# **Self Esteem**





# Goal Discovery

**Purpose:** To help learners and tutors set tangible, realistic goals. This is an extremely important part of lesson planning and ongoing assessment. If the learner's goals are unclear or unknown, the lessons may not be addressing the learner's true needs.

**Directions:** Make a list of possible goals for your learner. Your literacy program may have a pre-made list, or you can use the list on the following pages. Make sure your list has a place to check which goals are of interest to your partner.

Read through and discuss the list with your learning partner.

Mark the items your partner is already able to do. This is always a bit reassuring for the learner who may be overwhelmed by all of the information there is to learn.

8/95

register to vote

Circle or check the items your partner would like to work on. Once you have chosen these items, pick two or three to concentrate on.

Talk about what it will take to accomplish each of these goals. You will want to break larger goals into several pieces. For example, if your partner wants to obtain a driver's license, you can work on A) learning the signs, B) knowing the rules, and C) completing the permit application. Then discuss how long your partner feels it should take. Write a date beside each of the main goals you have chosen.

Knowing these goals will help you plan your lessons to meet the needs of your learning partner. Talk about the activities you do in lessons and how they apply to one of the goals your partner has set. Be sure to discuss these goals often so you know when your partner's goals change.

Every month, review what you have worked on and talk about how these activities are helping you both work toward the goals you set together. The more involved your partner becomes in goal setting and self assessment, the more ownership he or she will have over the learning. Setting and tracking goals together helps keep the learner involved in all parts of the learning process.



# Goals Discovery

## Learner Checklist

Can / Goal  
Do / Date

### Home and Family

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Read to children
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Help children with homework
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Read / write notes from/to child's school
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Read/write names of family members and friends
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Read/write your own address
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Use the phone book
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Write shopping lists
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Read/write recipes
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Use a calendar
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Tell time
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Balance checkbook

### Social/Community

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Read bills
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Write checks and money orders
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Read and write letters
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Read menus
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Participate more at religious services
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Read the Bible, or other religious texts
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Register to vote
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Become a U.S. citizen
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Get a library card

### Self

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Read a newspaper (Which sections?)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Read magazines (What type?)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Write in a journal
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Read books (What type?)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Write poetry or stories
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Read a driver's manual / get a license
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Read maps
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Obtain a GED

# Goals Discovery

## Learner Checklist

Can / Goal  
Do / Date

### Job/Employment

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Learn to use a computer
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Fill out forms and applications
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Read help-wanted ads
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Get a (better) job
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Take a test for a job, such as the civil service exam, the GATB, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Get into the armed forces (Which branch?)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Read about benefits
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Read/write names of co-workers
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Read /write specific occupational vocabulary
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Obtain a commercial driver's license
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Read/write inventory lists
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Follow a set of instructions
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Practice interviewing for a job
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Learn specific math skills

Did we miss anything? Can you think of anything else you would like to learn about?

Write the three most important goals below, noting if there are any smaller steps to accomplish in the process of obtaining each goal.

1.

2

3.



# Goal Mapping

**Purpose:** To help learners and tutors track the progress toward achieving the learner's goals. This is a good way to help learners see the many steps they need to take to achieve larger, more complex goals such as obtaining a GED or a driver's license, or even learning to read a specific book or set of words.

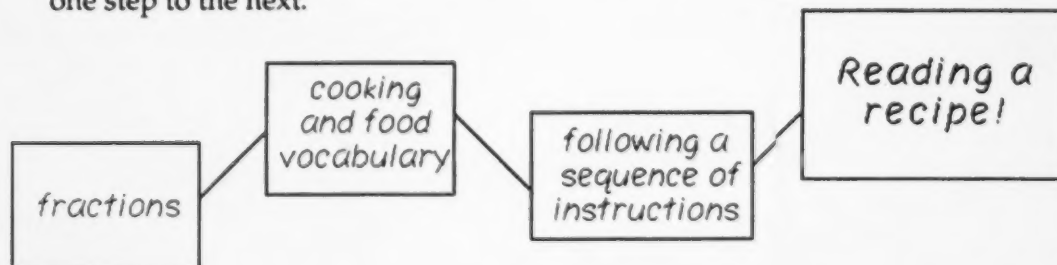
**Directions:** Once you have done the Goal Discovery activity with your learning partner, make a separate goal map for each of the 3 items your partner chose to work on.

Talk together about the steps involved in obtaining each of the goals. For example, reading cookbooks can be broken down into the following steps:

1. learning fractions
2. learning the vocabulary words for the different cooking skills (simmer, fry, blanch, etc.).
3. learning the vocabulary words for food items (eggs, milk, flour, etc.)
4. learning how to follow a sequence of instructions

If the goal is extremely large, such as obtaining the GED, you can break each step down as well.

Once you have determined the steps, draw a map that depicts the path from one step to the next.



For some goals, your partner will have to work on the steps in a specific order. Other goals, such as the cookbook example above, have steps which can be worked on in any order, or simultaneously.

As you work on each step, keep track of where you are by checking off the steps as you achieve them. This helps you both stay motivated and on track toward achieving those goals!



# Learner Portfolio

**Purpose:** To help track progress in writing, reading, or conversation skills. Portfolios help learners and tutors observe progress, assess the effectiveness of lesson activities, and maintain motivation and interest.

**Directions:** Choose a specific skill that you and your learner want to track. Portfolios are especially effective for writing assessment, but they can be used for reading, speaking or listening skills. For the purposes of clarity, we will use a writing portfolio as an example.

Bring a file folder or a large manila envelope to each lesson.

At the end of each lesson, review your activities, talking specifically about the writing you did in the lesson. Ask your partner which writing exercise he or she is most pleased with. Which writing sample would he or she like to put in the portfolio and why?

Make a note of the date and the reason for selection on each writing sample and place it in the portfolio.

Every six or eight weeks, review the contents of the portfolio. You will see progress in certain areas, and you will also see recurring problems that need to be addressed. Discuss both with your partner, stressing the improvements and talking about what he or she would like to work on next. Ask your partner which item in the portfolio is his or her favorite. Which activities would he or she like to do again? Which were the most difficult and why?

When your partner expresses concern about slow progress, you can pull out the portfolio and reassure him or her by looking at items from six months or a year ago. This is an extremely effective way of helping learners deal with the frustrations of learning to read and write.

## Modifications

A. For a conversational skills portfolio with an ESL learner, you can keep tape recordings of conversations you have with your partner during your lessons.

B. For a reading portfolio, make photocopies of passages read or words learned.

**Materials:** File folder or manila envelope



# I Like, I Can, I Am

**Purpose:** To help learners think about the things they enjoy, the skills they already have, and the good qualities they possess. This exercise helps learners feel more positive about themselves when they are facing the reality of their reading difficulty.

**Directions:** You and your learning partner will want to do this exercise together. The fact that you are willing to share things about yourself will help you develop a trusting relationship with your partner.

You and your partner should take turns thinking of 10 things that you like to do. Anything can be on this list - from hugging, to playing basketball, to eating. (You might find you have some things in common!) As you say an "I Like," write it down and then wait for your partner to name an "I Like."

Depending on the ability level of your partner, you may want to write these lists for your partner. You can also use visual symbols to depict the items on your list.

Next, take turns naming 10 things you can do. This list might consist of things such as "I can be a good parent," "I can smile," "I can hunt," or "I can eat an entire pizza by myself." Whatever you list, keep it positive.

Finally, take turns naming 10 characteristics that make up who you are. Examples might include friendly, considerate, hungry, tall, or happy. Again, try to keep these lists positive, but if your learner identifies with a negative characteristic, be aware in the future that this area may be a sensitive one.

As you make these lists together, talk about them. Emphasize that your partner should celebrate all of the skills he or she has, that he or she is already a very talented person, and a person with a great deal of worth.

This is also a good opportunity to discuss the fact that your partner is already a reader. Most adults in literacy programs have some reading skills, yet they say they cannot read. Reminding learners that they are building on their already existing reading skills can help them to eliminate the "I can't" from their vocabulary.

**Materials:** Paper and pencils

# Life Skills





# Clock Face

**Purpose:** To help learners understand the parts of the clock and what they represent. To help learners understand how to tell time.

**Directions:** Using hard cardboard, cut an 8" circle. Use a dark marker to write numbers on the face. Do not use roman numerals.

Also make a big and little hand out of cardboard. Color the big hand blue and the little hand red.

Cover the clock face and the watch hands with clear contact paper.

Punch a hole in the center of the face. Using a paper fastener, attach the clock hands to the face.

Now that you have a clock, talk with your learning partner about the different parts. You might want to work with the hour hand alone at first (you can even remove the minute hand until your partner is ready for it). Help your partner understand the difference between AM and PM.

Once your partner understands the way to read a clock, talk about expressions that we use to explain time, such as "quarter 'till", "half past", and "ten after." This is especially important for ESL learners.

## Modifications

- A. Tell your partner a time, and have him or her move the hands to make the clock read appropriately.
- B. Have your partner tell you times and check to see if you are correct.
- C. Tell your partner a time and have him or her set the clock. Then tell your partner an amount of time that has gone by. Have him or her move the clock again. For example, start at 11:45. Tell your partner that 30 minutes have gone by. Your partner should then move the hands to read 12:15.
- D. You can do the opposite of modification C. Tell your partner two times, and ask him or her to tell you how much time went by.

**Materials:** Cardboard, scissors, clear contact paper, markers, and paper fasteners.





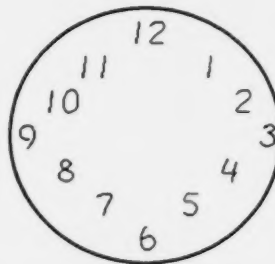
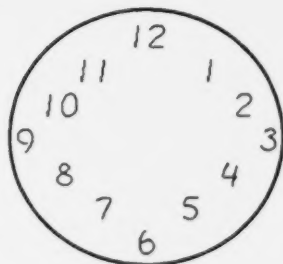
# What Time Is It?

**Purpose:** To help learners practice telling time. This is a good homework exercise and an excellent way to review.

**Directions:** Make a sheet of watch faces without hands. Photocopy this sheet so that you can use it again.

Write hands in each of the faces, depicting a different time.

Ask your partner to write the time underneath each clock face.



## Modifications

- A. Write an activity you might be doing at the time on each clock. Ask your partner to decide whether the time is AM or PM according to the activity you describe.
- B. Write the times underneath the clocks and ask your partner to draw the hands in appropriately.
- C. You can draw the minute hand in one color and the hour hand in another to help your partner tell the difference.
- D. When you take field trips with your partner, find as many clocks as you can and read them all!
- E. After your partner becomes good at this exercise, talk about the use of Roman numerals on some clocks. Make some clock sheets with Roman Numerals and help your partner practice reading them.

**Materials:** Paper and markers.



# Calendar

**Purpose:** To help learners understand how to use a calendar. Your partner should be familiar with the days of the week and the months of the year before you work on this activity.

**Directions:** Make a blank monthly calendar (see sample on following page).

Tell your partner the name of the month and the type of day that the month starts on (The month is March, March 1st is on a Wednesday.)

Have your partner fill in the rest of the calendar according to the information you have given.

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## Modifications

A. Tell your partner an activity and a day. Have your partner mark the correct day with a word or symbol that will remind him or her to do that activity. You may want to make a list of words or symbols for a variety of activities beforehand.

B. Ask your partner questions about the calendar such as "What kind of day is 5 days after Monday?" "What is the third Tuesday of the month?" or "What day is a week from the 16th?"

C. You can make a calendar for your partner to take home. Cover it with clear contact paper and use overhead markers to write in the month and the days. Use colored markers for holidays and mark your lesson times with a book on each day you meet. You can make a permanent list of words or symbols for your partner to hang right next to the calendar.

**Materials:** Paper, markers, and a sample calendar from a different year.

MSLC Idea Book  
Life Skills

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# Mock Conversation

**Purpose:** To help learners feel comfortable using the telephone. This is an ideal exercise for ESL learners, but it is also excellent for native speakers who may be looking for a job or using the phone to get information, rather than just for conversation.

**Directions:** If you can, bring in two old phones for this lesson.

Sit back to back with your partner, so that you can hear each other, but you cannot see each other.

Set up a situation and begin a phone conversation. For example, tell your partner to call someone about his or her missing dog. You might want to first discuss who her or she could call, and how to find that information.

For ESL learners, you will want to review related vocabulary and possibly a sample conversation for your partner to model until he or she is more comfortable with English.

Other possible conversation topics include:

Making a doctor's appointment  
Cancelling an appointment  
Calling in sick to work  
Ordering from a catalog  
Calling a Senator or Representative in Harrisburg  
Leaving a message for a spouse at work

## Modifications

- A. Call your partner and pretend to be a phone solicitor. Help your partner learn what to say if they do not want to talk to phone solicitors.
- B. Ask your partner to call you in between lessons. For ESL learners, especially, this is an excellent way to practice phone usage.
- C. Give your partner a list of 3 or 4 places to call and information to find out for homework. For example, ask your partner to call the newspaper and find out how much a classified ad costs.

**Materials:** Two old phones and sample conversations; Modification C: a list of places to call and information to get.



# The Yellow Pages

**Purpose:** To help learners understand how to find information in the yellow pages, as well as how to comparison shop with the telephone.

**Directions:** Bring a current Yellow Pages to your lessons. You can obtain an extra copy of your local phone book by calling the regional Bell of PA phone company.

Review alphabetization with your learning partner.

Talk about what types of information you might find in the Yellow Pages. Start by looking at one page. Talk about how to find the first and last entry on the page. Discuss how to use the index.

Ask your partner to pick a category to work with. Work on finding the category, and then looking for a specific store.

Next, talk about how to call several stores to find the prices on a specific item you need. If there is a phone at your tutoring site, use it to do this.

## **A1 Auto**

Foreign and Domestic  
State Inspection

McAlevys Fort.....667-4424  
or Toll Free.....800-890-3434

## **A1 Auto Tech**

State Inspection  
Towing and Emergency Services

651 Oak St. State College.....237-3533

## **Affordable Car Repair**

616 W College Av State College.....238-5640

Give your partner a list of two or three items he or she would like to purchase. Talk about what kinds of stores each item may be found in. Ask your partner to call around and find out where he or she can buy these items for the least amount of money.

**Materials:** A local phone book, phone, paper and pencils.